

***Circle Of Life<sup>SM</sup>: Cancer Education and Wellness for American Indian and Alaska Native Communities***



**American Cancer Society Circle Of Life<sup>SM</sup>**  
*Cancer Education and Wellness for American Indian and Alaska Native Communities*

**Wellness Along the Cancer Journey:  
Healthy Habits and Cancer Screening**  
Revised October 2015  
**Chapter 2: Food and Fitness**



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**Food and Fitness**

**Group Discussion**

- 1) Adults should eat this amount of vegetables and fruits each day:
  - a) 1 cup
  - b) 1 ½ cups
  - c) 2 cups
  - d) 2 ½ cups
  
- 2) Adults should get at least \_\_\_\_\_ minutes of moderate intensity activity or \_\_\_\_\_ minutes of vigorous intensity activity each week, preferably spread throughout the week.
  - a) 120 minutes, 60 minutes
  - b) 150 minutes, 75 minutes
  - c) 180 minutes, 90 minutes
  - d) 90 minutes, 45 minutes
  
- 3) Women should drink no more than \_\_\_\_\_ alcoholic drink(s) each day and men should drink no more than \_\_\_\_\_ alcoholic drink(s) each day.
  - a) 1 drink for women, 2 drinks for men
  - b) 2 drinks for women, 2 drinks for men
  - c) 1 drink for women, 1 drink for men
  - d) 2 drinks for women, 3 drinks for men

Many of the ancestral ways among American Indians and Alaska Native peoples were very healthy:

- active hunting and gathering traditional foods
- eating home-cooked and fresh foods
- not drinking alcohol
- (possibly) fewer lifetime sexual partners

Moving away from these traditional ways of living has led to an increase in many diseases in Native communities. Sitting in front of the TV or computer, eating more fast food, drinking more alcohol, and habitual smoking are not healthy habits.

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What a person eats (or doesn't eat) and how active they are may affect their risk of getting cancer. People can reduce their risk through simple lifestyle changes. Getting to and staying at a healthy weight can reduce a person's risk of cancer and other illnesses like diabetes and heart disease. In fact, up to one-third (1/3) of the cancer deaths in the United States each year are linked to excess body weight.

Being overweight or obese increases the risk of several cancers, including cancers of the breast (among women who have gone through menopause – stopped having their period), colon and rectum, lining of the uterus, esophagus (swallowing tube), kidney, and pancreas. Obesity can raise levels of hormones such as estrogen and insulin that can stimulate cancer growth. There are other factors by which obesity can lead to an increased risk of cancer. So staying at a healthy weight is an important way to reduce cancer risk.

A few simple ways to maintain a healthy weight include eating at least 2 ½ cups of vegetables and fruits each day, eating smaller portion sizes, choosing foods and drinks with fewer calories, and being physically active every day. See Appendix B for a list of common questions and about diet and exercise.

### **Eat Healthy Foods**

Adults should eat 2 ½ cups of fruits and vegetables each day to help prevent cancer. These foods contain important vitamins, minerals, nutrients, and antioxidants (nutrients that protect against damage to cells and tissues). Most are low in calories. In general, fruits and vegetables with the most color -- green, red, yellow, and orange -- have the most nutrients. People who eat more fruits and vegetables have a lower risk of several cancers, including cancers of the lung, mouth, esophagus, stomach, and colon.

Eating at least 2 ½ cups of vegetables and fruits each day may not be that hard to do when a person:

- Includes vegetables and fruits at every meal and for snacks.
- Eats a variety of vegetables and fruits each day.
- Emphasizes whole fruits and vegetables.
- If you drink vegetable or fruit juices, choose those labeled 100% juice.

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A person can make other healthy food choices by

- choosing whole grain foods over white breads, cereals, and pasta
- limiting processed meats and red meats such as beef, pork, or lamb
- using lean meats, fish, poultry, and substituting beans or peas a few times a week

Other ways to keep calorie counts down might include:

- Limit use of creamy sauces, dressings, gravy, and dips.
- Choose foods that are baked, poached, microwaved, or roasted rather than fried.
- Trim fat from meats and poultry.
- Limit intake of desserts and sweetened foods

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**Portion Sizes**

Watching portion sizes for meals is another way to get the nutrition that a person needs without adding extra calories that the body must store. For instance, three to four ounces is the serving size of meat – about the size of a deck of cards.

Cheeseburger



290 Calories

Quarter pounder with cheese



520 Calories

Each day, people should try to eat more vegetables and whole grains and fewer red or processed meats, fats, sugary food, and sugary drinks. The plate below can help people choose their foods so that meals are balanced. Notice that fruits and vegetables cover more than half the plate, and protein is less than a quarter of it.

Lowfat dairy as yogurt or lowfat as the dairy serving.

products such milk can count



## More My Native Plates for Your Family

### YOUTH PLATE

Use a 7-inch plate for youth.

### BREAKFAST

### LUNCH

### DINNER

For recipe ideas, go to [www.diabetes.org](http://www.diabetes.org) and click on Food & Fitness. Produced by Indian Health Service, Division of Diabetes Treatment and Prevention and based on the USDA MyPlate. For more information, go to [www.ChooseMyPlate.gov](http://www.ChooseMyPlate.gov)

(Indian Health Service, Division of Diabetes Treatment and Prevention. My Native Plate.

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**Cook Smarter**

Men who eat a lot of red meat or high-fat dairy products appear to have a slightly higher chance of prostate cancer. These men also tend to eat fewer fruits and vegetables. Researchers are not sure which of these factors raises the risk. Limiting red meat and animal fats may be important to reduce risk for cancer and heart disease. Choose lean meats and lower-fat dairy products, and use vegetable oils like canola and olive in place of butter or lard.

Most recipes can be changed to increase the vegetables, fruits, and fiber, and lower the sugar, saturated fat, and calories. These are options to decrease the fat and calories in daily cooking:

- Fats like oil, butter, or margarines can usually be cut by one-third to one-half in recipes. Try a small cut-back at first and then cut back a little more each time.
- To replace some moisture and flavor loss when fat is reduced, try using broth, non-fat milk, fruit juice, and extra herbs, spices, and vegetables.
- For moist baked goods when fat is reduced, add dried fruits or applesauce.
- Substitute low-fat milk and low-fat cheese for those higher in saturated fats and calories.
- Use smaller amounts of fatty foods like avocados, coconuts, cheese, and nuts.

Here are a few examples of things you can substitute to decrease the fat and calories in common foods:

<b>Instead of:</b>	<b>Try this:</b>	<b>Reduce fat calories by this much!</b>
Whole milk	1% (low-fat)	45 calories per cup
2% milk	Skim milk (nonfat)	45 calories per cup
Cheddar cheese	Low-fat cheddar	66 calories per ounce
Ice cream	Ice milk or frozen yogurt	40 calories per 1/2 cup
Sour cream	Non-fat sour cream	18 calories per tablespoon
Potato chips	Baked potato chips	90 calories per ounce
Buttered popcorn	Light popcorn	63 calories per serving
Ice cream bar	Frozen fudge pop	108 calories per bar
Pepperoni pizza	Vegetable pizza	63 calories per slice

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**Alcohol**

Alcohol raises the risk of cancers of the mouth, throat (pharynx), voice box (larynx), esophagus, liver, breast, and the colon and rectum. People who drink alcohol should limit their intake to no more than two drinks per day for men and one drink per day for women. A drink is defined as 12 ounces of beer, five ounces of wine, or 1.5 ounces of 80-proof distilled spirits.

Alcohol and tobacco together raise the risk of some cancers far more than the effect of either drinking or smoking alone. Regular intake of even a few drinks per week is linked to a higher risk of breast cancer in women. Women at high risk of breast cancer may want to think about not drinking any alcohol.



**Physical Fitness**

It is possible to have more energy, feel better, and lower stress levels all while reducing the risk of disease. Finding activities that fit a person’s lifestyle and ideas for raising active kids can help people stay on track. Regular physical activity can lower the lifetime risk for cancer, heart disease, and diabetes.

It is important to get to and stay at a healthy weight. Adults should get at least 150 minutes of moderate intensity activity or 75 minutes of vigorous intensity activity each week. Children and teens should be encouraged to be active at moderate and vigorous intensities at least an hour a day, every day.

**Moderate activity** is anything that makes someone breathe as hard as they do during a brisk walk. During moderate activity, a person may notice a slight increase in heart rate and breathing, but might not break a sweat. Moderate



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activities include things like dancing, horseback riding, canoeing, golfing, and mowing the lawn.

**Vigorous activity** tends to engage large muscle groups. It speeds up the heart, causes a person to breathe faster and deeper, and causes sweating. Vigorous activities include things like jogging, swimming, martial arts, lacrosse, basketball, carpentry, and carrying or hauling things.

Ways to Stay Active:





- Use stairs rather than an elevator.
- Walk or bike to where you're going.
- Exercise at lunch with workmates, family, or friends.
- Take a 10-minute exercise break at work to stretch, or take a quick walk.
- Walk to see co-workers instead of sending an email.
- Go dancing with a spouse or friends.
- Plan active vacations.
- Wear a pedometer or activity monitor every day and watch daily steps increase.
- Join a sports team.
- Use a stationary bicycle or treadmill while watching TV.

Other than these kinds of physical activities, a person can lift weights, stretch, or try yoga to improve strength and flexibility. No matter what kind of activity a person chooses, the important thing is to get moving. Try to fit in at least 150 minutes per week of moderate intensity activity. Then, look for other ways to be active throughout the day. See Appendix C for the American Cancer Society Guidelines on nutrition and physical activity.

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**Activity**

We know that each season brings a new wealth of fruits, vegetables, and meats for us to enjoy. Each season also brings opportunities for new activities that will help us stay healthy and strong. For each season, list two to three foods that grow in your area and how you can prepare these foods in a healthy way. Also identify at least one physical activity that you or your family can do during this season to increase your fitness levels.

<b>Seasons of Food &amp; Fitness</b>	<b>Spring – time of birth</b> 	<b>Summer – time of growth</b> 	<b>Fall – time of harvest</b> 	<b>Winter – time of rest</b> 
<b>Nature’s medicine</b> (e.g., maple sap, flax seed)				
<b>Fruit / Vegetable</b> (e.g., strawberry, asparagus)				
<b>Meat / Fish</b> (e.g., trout, pickerel)				
<b>Activity</b> (e.g., gardening, horseback riding)				

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**Key Messages**

- Achieve and maintain a healthy weight throughout life by choosing fruits and healthy foods as snacks. Change recipes to lower the saturated fat, sugar, and calories.
- Limit time spent sitting each day. Find ways to add more physical activity into each day by taking family walks, parking further away from the store entrance, and taking the stairs instead of elevators. Cut back the daily amount of TV or video game time for children and grandchildren.
- Ask for healthier food choices at work and in children's schools.
- Choose restaurants that offer healthy meal options.
- Be active in schools and communities to help increase access to safe and enjoyable places to walk and bike, and play.