

Wellness Articles

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If you would like to be added to the distribution list for these articles, please email: Rebecca.johnson2@albertahealthservices.ca. You will receive a monthly email containing articles for the upcoming four weeks.

An archive of past wellness articles is available at <http://www.albertahealthservices.ca/9966.asp>

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Reducing cancer risk with nutrition

April is Cancer Awareness Month. Living a healthy lifestyle can help to reduce your risk of getting cancer. A healthy lifestyle includes many factors: not smoking, being sun safe, having a healthy body weight, staying active, limiting alcohol and eating well. You can reduce your risk of cancer by following the tips below.

Fill half your plate with vegetables and fruit

Choose different kinds and colours of vegetables and fruit every day. Challenge yourself to fill half your plate with non-starchy vegetables or fruit at each meal.

Choose cruciferous vegetables such as broccoli, cauliflower, cabbage, Brussels sprouts, kale, turnips, and collard greens. You may lower the risk of some types of cancer.

Eat a diet rich in fibre

Try to eat 30 grams of fibre each day. Eat plant foods such as whole grains and pulses, including chickpeas, kidney beans and white beans.

Limit red meat

If you eat red meat (pork, beef, lamb and veal, for example), eat only moderate amounts.

If you do eat red meat, eat it no more than three times each week. Choose a portion size that is about 3 oz (85 g), roughly the size of a deck of cards. Limit how much processed meat (deli meats, sausages and smoked or cured meats) that you eat.

Not every meal has to include meat. Beans, peas and lentils are good protein choices and will increase your fibre intake, too. Try eating beans, peas, or lentils instead of meat in some of your favourite dishes.

Avoid alcohol

Drinking alcohol may increase your risk of certain types of cancer. If you choose to drink alcohol, keep it to less than one drink for women each day and less than two drinks for men each day.

One standard drink of alcohol is 12 oz (341 mL) of five per cent beer or 5 oz (142 mL) of wine, or 1.5 oz (43 mL) of 40 per cent distilled alcohol.

Start with small changes. They add up to help lower your risk of cancer.