

Reduce Your Cancer Risk

10 Ways to Reduce Your Cancer Risk: Based on the European Code Against Cancer

Did you know 4 out of 10 cancer cases can be prevented? For example, we can watch what we eat, choose not to smoke, limit our alcohol consumption, and take regular exercise.

What can you do to reduce your risk of cancer?

1. Do not smoke & avoid second-hand smoke

One in three of all cancers is related to smoking. Cut out the cigarettes and cut your cancer risk. Keep your home and workplace smoke free. Second-hand smoke increases the risk of lung cancer and heart disease in non-smokers.

2. Maintain a healthy weight

As the amount of fat in the body increases, so does the chance of developing certain cancers. Take action to have a healthy body weight by exercising and eating a healthy diet.

3. Be physically active in everyday life

Limit the time you spend sitting and aim for at least 30 minutes of moderate physical activity a day.

4. Eat the rainbow

Eat fruit, vegetables, whole grains and pulses. Limit foods high in sugar, salt and fat. Avoid processed meat and limit red meat. Eating the rainbow involves eating fruits and vegetables of different colours every day. This helps increase the numbers of immune cells involved in the initial response to infections & removing mutated cells an action that could help protect against cancer.

5. Avoid alcohol

Drinking alcohol can cause at least seven types of cancer. Cutting back – or even better – avoiding alcohol altogether will reduce your risk.

6. Avoid too much sun

Skin cancer is the most common cancer in Ireland with over 11,000 new cases diagnosed in 2015. Be SunSmart: protect your skin when outdoors (sunscreen is not enough) and avoid sunbeds.

7. Radiation

Find out if you are exposed to radiation from naturally high radon levels in your home. Find out more information on radon levels from the Environmental Protection Agency. www.epa.ie

8. Advice for women

Breastfeeding is proven to reduce the risk of cancer. HRT is a hormonal drug for menopausal symptoms which increase risk of certain cancers. Limit HRT.

9. Get vaccinations

Some cancers are spread by viruses and bacteria. Ensure your children take part in vaccination programmes for Hepatitis B (for newborns) and Human papillomavirus (HPV) (for girls over 12 years).

10. Get screened for cancer

Screening is checking for cancer or conditions that may lead to cancer in people that may have no symptoms. Take part in organised cancer screening programmes for bowel cancer (men and women, breast cancer (women) and cervical cancer (women). www.cancerscreening.ie

Information gathered from the Irish Cancer Society. Find out more about the European Code Against Cancer and ways to reduce your cancer risk on www.cancer.ie/europeancode



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