

Reduce your risk of cancer



Irish Cancer Prevention Network



Physical Activity

- Physical activity can reduce your risk of cancer by promoting healthy hormone and insulin levels, reducing inflammation and helping maintain a healthy body weight.
- Any amount of activity is better than none.
- Adults should try to aim for at least
 - 150 minutes of moderate physical activity across each week (moderate physical activity makes you a little out of breath, but you can talk comfortably)
or
 - 75 minutes of vigorous activity across each week (vigorous activities will raise your heart rate, make you sweat and feel out of breath)
and
 - muscle strengthening activities at moderate or greater intensity that involve all major muscle groups on 2 or more days a week.
- For more information visit www.gov.ie/healthyireland



Skin Protection

- To reduce your risk of skin cancer protect your skin from the sun and never use sunbeds.
- Follow the Healthy Ireland SunSmart steps, especially from April to September in Ireland, even when it is cloudy:
 - Slip on clothing that covers your skin.
 - Slap on sunscreen, using factor 30+ for adults and 50+ for children.
 - Slap on a wide-brimmed hat.
 - Seek shade and always use a sunshade on a child's buggy.
 - Slide on sunglasses to protect your eyes.
- Visit www.hse.ie/SunSmart for more information.



Healthy Eating

- Eating a healthy balanced diet can help you maintain a healthy body weight and reduce your cancer risk. Your overall diet is more important than focusing on individual foods.
- Eat foods high in fibre such as fruit, vegetables, wholegrains and pulses.
- Limit foods high in fat, sugar and salt.
- Avoid processed meat and limit red meat, as these have been linked to bowel cancer.
- For more information visit www.gov.ie/healthyireland



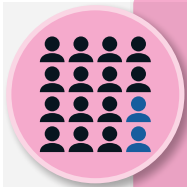
Vaccinations

- Vaccinations can protect against some kinds of cancer.
- The human papillomavirus (HPV) vaccine protects against HPV. HPV can cause a range of cancers including cervical, penis, anal, mouth and throat cancer. The HPV vaccine is offered to first-year students in secondary schools. It is also offered to men who have sex with men (MSM) and others who are at increased risk of exposure to HPV.
- Hepatitis B vaccine protects against liver cancer. It is offered to all babies in Ireland at 2, 4 and 6 months of age as part of the Primary Childhood Immunisation Schedule.
- For more information visit www.immunisation.ie



Breastfeeding

- Breastfeeding reduces the mother's risk of breast cancer by lowering certain hormones in the body and may protect cells in the breast from changes.
- The longer a woman has breastfed over the course of her life, the more the woman is protected.
- If you can, consider breastfeeding.
- Explore breastfeeding information and support during pregnancy at www.mychild.ie



Cancer Screening

- Consider taking part in organised population screening programmes for:
 - Breast cancer (women aged 50-69 years). Visit www.breastcheck.ie
 - Cervical cancer (women and people with a cervix aged 25-65 years). Visit www.cervicalcheck.ie
 - Bowel cancer (people aged 59-69 years). Visit www.bowelscreen.ie



Smoking

- Tobacco contains chemicals that increase the risk of at least 15 types of cancer. Tobacco products include cigarettes, roll your own, chewing tobacco, pipes or cigars.
- The best form of defence is not to start smoking.
- Quitting tobacco products reduces your cancer risk.
- For help quitting, visit the HSE Stop Smoking service www.quit.ie or call **1800 201 203**.

Second Hand Smoke

- Second hand tobacco smoke increases cancer risk.
- Make your home, car and workplace smoke free.



Alcohol

- When alcohol is broken down in your body it can damage your body's cells.
- Alcohol increases the risk of at least 7 types of cancer, including mouth, throat, larynx, oesophagus, breast, stomach and bowel.
- You can reduce your risk of cancer if you do not drink alcohol. The less you drink, the lower your risk of cancer.
- Visit www.askaboutalcohol.ie for more information.



Body Weight

- Higher body weight can affect your hormone levels and your immune system, increasing risk of cancer.
- You can reduce risk of cancer by keeping weight within a healthy range.
- Eating a healthy balanced diet, being physically active, getting enough sleep and taking care of your mental health can all help to maintain a healthy body weight throughout life.
- Support options are available to those living with overweight or obesity. Ask your GP for information.



Radon

- Radon is a naturally occurring radioactive gas found in the environment. It has no colour, taste or smell.
- It can increase the risk of lung cancer in people exposed to high levels of radon over long periods of time.
- The risk from radon is even higher for smokers, so it is even more important to think about quitting smoking.
- For more information on how to check radon levels in your home or workplace, and how to reduce them, visit www.radon.ie



Workplace

- Some workplaces involve exposure to cancer-causing substances such as benzene, silica dust, asbestos and wood dust.
- Follow your workplace safety risk assessment control measures to reduce your exposure to cancer-causing substances in your workplace.
- If you work outdoors make sure you protect your skin from the sun's ultraviolet radiation.
- Visit www.hsa.ie/chemicals and www.hse.ie/SunSmart for more information.



Hormones

Oral Contraceptive Pill (OCP)

- The combined OCP can increase the risk of breast and cervical cancer, but can decrease risk of ovarian and womb cancer.
- Each person's risk will be different.
- Talk to your GP about what is right for you.

Hormone Replacement Therapy (HRT)

- Menopausal HRT can increase risk of ovarian, breast, womb and ovarian cancer but the increased risk is small.
- The risk from HRT depends on many different things. This includes the type of HRT, when people start taking it, how long they take it for, age, and general health.
- For some, the benefits of taking HRT outweigh the risks. Everyone is different.
- Talk to your GP about your options.

Contact prevention@cancercontrol.ie
or visit www.hse.ie/cancerprevention
for more information

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