

# Healthy workplace

Your monthly Anthem wellness newsletter



## Don't Give Cancer a Chance. Stay on Top of These 6 Things.

Cancer comes in all shapes and sizes, and people of all ages can get it. But there are things you can do to protect your health. The best ways to stop cancer in its tracks are to get your cancer screenings on time and take small steps each day to stay healthy. Start by putting these things on your to-do list:

1. See your doctor for regular checkups so you can get the screenings you need.
2. Maintain a healthy weight.
3. Exercise regularly.
4. Eat a healthy diet.
5. Don't use tobacco and avoid cigarette smoke.
6. Protect yourself from the sun.

**Healthy Hint:** Have you been diagnosed with cancer? Does someone you love have cancer? No matter how cancer impacts your life, we can help clear your path to answers with support and guidance from experts. Check out [www.freecancerresources.com](http://www.freecancerresources.com) for more information.

## What Can I Do to Prevent Cancer?

By Kara Mayer Robinson: WebMD

You've heard a lot about how important it is to cut your risk of cancer, but you probably wonder: Just how much is really in your own hands?



"There is no bomb-proof way to completely prevent cancer," says James Hamrick, MD, MPH, chief of oncology at Kaiser Permanente in Atlanta. But changes to your lifestyle and the right screening tests can lower your chances of getting the disease.

### Tests That Check for Cancer

Tests for certain kinds of cancer, like colorectal and cervical, may catch it before it develops. Colon cancer, for example, usually starts with growths in your colon called polyps. If your tests spot them, your doctor can often take them out before they turn into cancer.

There are several tests that check for colon polyps:

- **Colonoscopy and sigmoidoscopy.** In these procedures, your doctor uses a thin tube with a tiny video camera on the end to look inside your colon and rectum. A colonoscopy lets your doctor see those entire areas. But he can only examine part of the colon with a sigmoidoscopy.
- **Fecal occult blood test (FOBT).** It looks for blood in your bowel movement, which could be a sign of a polyp or cancer.

To check for cervical cancer in women, doctors use two types of tests:

- **Pap test.** It can often find changes in cells before they turn into cancer.
- **HPV (humanpapilloma virus) test.** It looks for infections that may lead to the disease.

## Vaccines

Some may lower your chances of getting cancer. For example, the human papillomavirus (HPV) vaccine may prevent cervical, vaginal, vulvar, and anal cancer. Getting a hepatitis B vaccine may lower your risk of liver cancer.

## Surgery

Some women with a high risk of breast cancer choose to have one or both breasts removed as a way to prevent it from developing. This is called "prophylactic" mastectomy. For instance, some women find out they're at higher risk for this type of cancer because they have changes to their BRCA1 or BRCA2 genes. Or they may have a strong family history of the disease.

If that's your situation, you and your doctor may discuss the possibility of a mastectomy, even if you don't have signs of cancer.

Other surgeries, like tubal ligation and hysterectomy, may lower your chances of getting a certain type of ovarian cancer. But doctors don't recommend them unless they're needed for other medical reasons.

## Lifestyle Changes

You can lower your risk of getting cancer by making healthy choices.

**Don't smoke.** If you have a tobacco habit, it's time to quit. Smoking is clearly linked to lung cancer. It also may raise your chances of getting cancers of the head and neck, esophagus, bladder, kidney, liver, pancreas, cervix, colon, and some kinds of leukemia.

Also, avoid places where you might breathe in the smoke from other people's cigarettes, because it also raises your risk.

**Stay out of the sun.** You can slash your odds of skin cancer if you limit your contact with the sun's rays. Follow these tips:

- Use sunscreen with SPF 30 or higher.
- Stay in the shade when you're outside.
- Wear clothes that cover your arms and legs.
- Pop on a hat and sunglasses.
- Avoid the sun when it's strongest -- between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m.
- Don't use indoor tanning beds.

**Keep to a healthy weight.** "Obesity causes breast and endometrial cancer, so weight control is important," says Alfred Neugut, MD, PhD, co-director of the Cancer Prevention Center of New York Presbyterian Hospital. It's also linked to cancers of the colon and rectum, esophagus, kidney, and pancreas. If you're overweight, it helps to shed even a few pounds.

**Eat well.** Make sure you get plenty of fruits, veggies, and whole grains. They have fiber, which is linked to a lower risk of colon cancer.

Look for foods with beta-carotene, lycopene, and vitamins A, C, and E. They're types of "antioxidants," which may play a role in preventing cancer.



"Limit red meat, especially processed meat. Save bacon for special occasions, if you eat it at all," Hamrick says. Processed meats, like deli meats, hams, and hot dogs, may be linked to colorectal and stomach cancer.

Try not to char your food. You want to cook it enough to kill germs, but frying, broiling, or grilling at high temperatures may bump up your cancer risk. Instead, try braising, steaming, or poaching.

You may have heard that supplements like selenium and vitamin E can cut your risk. But there isn't enough evidence to suggest it's true. Some supplements may even increase your risk.

**Exercise.** The more you move the better. It may lower your chances of getting breast, colon, endometrium, prostate, and other cancers. Swim, jog, walk, or do anything that gets you moving. If you're starting out, try walking. "It's inexpensive, time-efficient, and can be done with others," Hamrick says.

- Aim for 150 minutes or more every week.
- Cut back on how much you sit, lie around, and watch TV.

**Don't drink too much alcohol.** It's been linked to mouth, voice box, throat, liver, breast, and colon cancer.

You don't have to avoid it altogether. Think moderation. Stick to one drink a day if you're a woman, two if you're a man. All these things may lower your risk, but they're not a guarantee.

Source: <http://www.webmd.com/cancer/features/cancer-prevention-what-works#1>

## It's Allergy Season!

Watery eyes, itchiness, runny nose. Sound familiar? If it does, you might have allergies.

An allergic reaction is when your immune system has a bad response to something. Normally your immune system protects your body from getting sick because of things like bacteria and viruses. It also helps protect you against allergens, the things that set off an allergic reaction. When it doesn't do that job, it's like having a very sensitive alarm system — it alerts your body to things that really shouldn't cause a reaction.

## What causes allergies?

A lot of people have allergies. Your genes and the environment can play a role in that. If both of your parents have allergies, you'll probably have allergies. But you may not be allergic to the same things or have the same reactions

Common allergy triggers are

- Pollen
- Mold
- Pet dander
- Dust
- Food
- Medicines
- Insect bites
- Jewelry
- Makeup
- Spices
- Headache
- Hives or skin rash
- Itchy nose, mouth, throat, skin or other part of the body
- Runny nose



## Signs

Allergy symptoms can be different from one person to the next. But here are some common signs:

- Breathing problems or wheezing

- Burning, tearing, itchy, red or swollen eyes
- Coughing
- Diarrhea, stomach cramps or throwing up
- Headaches
- Hives or skin rash
- Itchy nose, mouth
- Runny nose

## 8 Home Remedies for Allergies

You can use home treatment to relieve symptoms of:



- **Itching or hives.** Avoid more contact with whatever you think is causing the hives.
- **A sore throat caused by postnasal drip.** People age 8 years or older can gargle with warm salt water at least once each hour to help ease throat soreness.
- **Hay fever or other seasonal allergies.** Use saline drops or a humidifier to help clear a stuffy nose. Or take an allergy medicine that's specific to your symptoms. Be safe with medicines. Read and follow all instructions on the label.
- **Allergies that are worse in damp weather.** Mold may be the cause of allergies that get worse in damp weather. Mold produces spores that move, like pollen, in outdoor air during warmer months. During winter months, indoor molds can also be a problem.
- **Indoor allergies.** Newer, energy-saving homes that are built with double- or triple-paned windows and more insulation keep heat and allergens indoors.
- **Allergies to a pet or other animal.** When allergies are worse around pets, symptoms may be caused by your pet's dead skin (dander), urine, dried saliva, or hair.

Try a nonprescription medicine for the relief of itching, redness, and swelling. Be sure to follow the nonprescription medicine precautions.

- An antihistamine medicine, such as Benadryl or Chlor-Trimeton, may help relieve itching, redness, and swelling. Don't give antihistamines to your child unless you've checked with the doctor first.
- Calamine lotion or hydrocortisone cream applied to the skin may help relieve itching.

Source: <http://www.webmd.com/allergies/guide/allergic-reaction-home-treatment-options>

## Roasted Asparagus and Baby Artichokes



TOTAL TIME 52 minutes  
YIELDS: Serves 8 (serving size: about 1/2 cup)

### Ingredients

- 20 baby artichokes (about 2 1/2 pounds)
- 5 thin lemon slices
- 1 1/2 tablespoons olive oil, divided
- 1 pound asparagus, trimmed and cut into 2-inch pieces
- 2 tablespoons butter, melted
- 2 tablespoons chopped fresh flat-leaf parsley
- 1 tablespoon fresh lemon juice
- 1/2 teaspoon kosher salt
- 1/2 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
- 1 1/2 tablespoons pine nuts, toasted



### What's in Season this Spring?

Apricots  
Artichokes  
Arugula  
Asparagus  
Beets  
Carrots  
Chard  
Cherries  
Dandelion Greens  
Fava Beans  
Fennel  
Fiddleheads  
Garlic  
Scrapes/Green  
Garlic



Grapefruit  
Kale  
Kohlrabi  
Leeks  
Parsley  
Peas  
Radishes  
Ramps  
Rhubarb  
Spinach  
Spring Onion  
Spinach  
Strawberries  
Turnips



- ### Preparation
1. Place a large baking sheet in oven. Preheat oven to 450°. (Leave baking pan in oven as it heats.)
  2. Cut off top third of each artichoke. Trim stem to within 1 inch of base; peel stem. Remove bottom leaves and tough outer leaves, leaving tender middle and bottom. Cut each artichoke in half lengthwise. Place artichokes, lemon slices, and 1 tablespoon oil in a bowl; toss to coat. Arrange mixture in a single layer on hot baking sheet. Roast at 450° for 15 minutes or until almost done and beginning to brown, stirring well after 10 minutes.
  3. Toss asparagus with remaining 1 1/2 teaspoons oil. Stir asparagus into artichoke mixture. Roast at 450° for 10 minutes or until tender, stirring after 5 minutes.
  4. Place vegetable mixture in a large bowl. Add butter and next 4 ingredients (through pepper); toss gently to combine. Sprinkle evenly with pine nuts.

Recipe Source: <http://www.myrecipes.com/recipe/>