

# Super Seniors News *April 2011 Newsletter*

Dear Friends,

This issue of Super Seniors News will be dedicated to Cancer Awareness Month. We will focus on why cancer risk increases with age and how diet and activity can help delay aging and fight cancer.

Sincerely,

*Jacquelyn W. Gibson*

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## **It's Never Too Late**

Your risk for cancer increases as you age. By the time you reach 65, your risk is 10 times higher than someone younger. That's the bad news.

The good news: research is now showing that simple, healthy everyday steps like moving more, eating smart and staying lean offer you real protection—no matter what your age.

But thousands of older Americans still haven't heard this vital message or don't know how to get started. That's why the American Institute for Cancer and Research (AICR) has launched a new campaign to arm Americans over 50 with the knowledge to take control of their health.

Join AICR's It's Never to Late to Lower Your Cancer Risk campaign by setting personal goals, and learning as much as you can to help you on your journey.

## **How Much Do You Know About Cancer?**

### **AICR CANCER AWARENESS QUIZ**

1. Getting to and staying at a healthy weight decreases the risk of at least five different cancers.

True \_\_\_ False\_\_\_



2. Avoid snacking because it will increase insulin levels, which may increase risk for cancer.

True \_\_\_ False\_\_\_

3. Daily physical activity is important to lower the risk of cancer because it helps with weight control.

True \_\_\_ False\_\_\_

4. For cancer prevention, a person at a healthy weight only needs 30 minutes of physical activity three times a week, although more activity may play a role in reducing the risk of other diseases.

True \_\_\_ False\_\_\_

5. Eating the same vegetables and fruits daily will customize the phytochemicals to the antigens in my immune system and help lower cancer risk.

True \_\_\_ False\_\_\_

6. Drinking one glass of red wine daily, for a woman, and two glasses for a man (moderate levels) may play a role in preventing heart disease and cancer.

True \_\_\_ False\_\_\_

7. If I eat large amounts of red meat regularly I should double the amount of vegetables and fruit in order to neutralize any possible carcinogens.

True \_\_\_ False\_\_\_

8. Antioxidant supplements, such as EGCG, help prevent cancer.

True \_\_\_ False\_\_\_

9. About one-third of cancer cases in the United States could be prevented by eating a healthful diet, staying at a healthy weight, and engaging in

regular physical activity.

True \_\_\_ False\_\_\_

### How did you do?

Give yourself 2 points for a correct answer.

### Answers:

1. True: AICR's expert report found convincing evidence that excess body fat is a cause of 6 different cancers: colorectal, post-menopausal breast, endometrial, pancreatic, kidney and esophageal. Carrying excess body fat causes more than 100,000 cancer cases each year in the United States.

2. False: If you enjoy snacking, eating between meals can help increase your intake of fruits and vegetables. In order to avoid weight gain, limit intake of high-fat and high-calorie snacks.

3. True: AICR recommends at least 30 minutes of daily moderate physical activity.

4. False: AICR's recommendation for 30 minutes of daily moderate physical activity is based on research that shows exercise plays a role in weight control and fights cancer independent of weight. Get in the habit of being active, slowly. It's almost spring: just do it.

5. False: Ah...no. Variety is key. Each vegetable and fruit contains a unique phytochemical profile that may work in different ways to prevent cancer. Researchers continue to identify phytochemicals and how they work in the body.

### Here's a sampling of the results from AICR's Awareness Survey:

- Only 51 percent of Americans realize that obesity is a cause of cancer.
- 52 percent know that diets low in vegetables and fruit increases risk.
- Less than half of Americans (46 percent) realize that a lack of physical activity increases risk.
- 38 percent of Americans recognize that diets high in red meat increases risk.

6. False: Although some research suggests that moderate amounts of alcohol lower the risk of heart disease, there is no amount of alcohol that prevents cancer. Even small amount of alcohol are linked with increased risk of cancer. (AICR guidelines suggest not drinking if you have not started. If you do drink, drink moderate amounts.)

7. False: Don't eat large amounts of red meat. The AICR expert report found that eating more than 18 ounces of red meat per week increases the risk of colorectal cancer. The compounds in plant-based foods may help stop possible carcinogens from becoming cancerous, but there is no clear research linking these foods stopping the possible cancer-effects from red meat. AICR recommends that the food on your plate be composed of over 2/3 plant foods and less than 1/3 animal foods; this will help ensure that you keep your meat intake low while enjoying satisfying and potentially protective meals.

8. False: Although research still continues, the body of evidence to date has found that supplements do not help prevent cancer and cannot take the place of a healthy diet. If you want EGCG drink tea, which contains many other possible protective substances. Also count on vegetables, fruits, whole grains and beans as important sources of antioxidants and other protective compounds.

9. True: Along with screenings, there is a lot that individuals can do to prevent cancer. Want to get started? Visit AICR's Reduce Your Cancer Risk.

### Tally your score and see how you compare.

**0–6 points:** Ok, room for improvement. The average American probably has you beat when it comes to knowledge about the cancer-lifestyle link at least. The good news: there's plenty to learn and you can turn to AICR materials to help.

**8–12 points:** Good start, nothing to hang your head over. You know about the same as the survey respondents, which is OK, but it means there's a lot

more to understand when it comes to cancer prevention.

**14–18 points:** Excellent, treat yourself to an extra apple. You likely know more about the cancer-lifestyle link than the average American, so feel free to brag a bit. You're also likely a regular eNews reader, and we hope you spread the word.

Source: <http://www.aicr.org>

### A Healthy Diet and Physical Activity Can Help Prevent Cancer



Making healthy life choices, ones that can help protect against cancer along with other health problems, is easier to do than you think. A good starting point is to follow the American Institute for Cancer Research (AICR) Guidelines for Cancer Prevention:

- Choose mostly plant foods, limit red meat and avoid process meat.
- Be physically active every day in any way for 30 minutes or more.
- Aim to be a healthy weight throughout life.

And always remember .....

....Do not smoke or chew tobacco.

Let's look at the dietary guidelines:

### Choose Mostly Plant Foods, Limit Red Meat and Processed Meat

- *For good health, AICR recommends that we base all of our meals on plant foods. When preparing a meal aim to fill at least two-thirds of your plate with vegetables, fruits, whole grains and beans.*

Research shows that vegetables and fruits probably protect against a range of cancers.

- *Limit Consumption of Red Meats (such as beef, pork and lamb) and Avoid Processed Meat.*

To reduce your cancer risk, eat no more than 18 oz. (cooked weight) per week of red meats, like beef, pork and lamb and avoid processed meat such as ham, bacon, pastrami, salami, hot dogs and sausages.

When meat is preserved by smoking, curing or salting, or by the addition of preservatives, cancer causing substances (carcinogens) can be formed. The substances can damage cells in the body, leading to the development of cancer.

- *Limit Consumption of Salty Foods and Foods Processed with Salt (sodium)*

Consuming too much salt can be harmful to our health, increasing our risk of stomach cancer as well as high blood pressure. Studies have shown that high salt intake can damage the lining of the stomach. This is one way in which it might increase the risk of stomach cancer.

Our daily intake of salt should be less than 2,300 milligrams. We actually need less than this. The 2010 Dietary Guidelines recommend an intake of 1,500 mg for Americans 51 years or older.



- *Avoid Sugary Drinks, Limit Consumption of Energy Dense Foods (particularly processed foods high in added sugar, low in fiber, or high in fat)*

Choosing healthy foods and drinks instead of those that are high in refined carbohydrates and often in added sugar and fat (energy-dense foods) can help us avoid overweight.

Consuming sugary drinks contribute to weight gain. Sugary drinks include: soft drinks like colas and juice flavored drinks. We should try to avoid these drinks because of their high caloric content. Water is the best alternative.

- *If consumed at all, Limit Alcoholic Drinks to 2 for Men and 1 for Women a Day.*

The evidence that all types of alcoholic drinks increases the risk of a number of cancers is now stronger than it was in the 1990's.

### **Need Help in a Hurry Call 3-1-1**



The 3-1-1 Answer Center provides a fast, simple and convenient way for residents to get information on local government services.

Each year 3-1-1 handles 2.5 million calls for service, which aren't limited to county concerns, but which cover a broad range of requests across all levels of government, from city to state and even federal. No longer is it necessary to find the phone number for public works, code enforcement or solid waste. Is there a stray dog near your home? Is there an abandoned vehicle in your neighborhood? Do you have questions on paying property taxes. Need a cat or dog license? Need to know which bus to take to get to your appointment on time?

It is as easy as dialing three digits: 3-1-1. And for the growing number of people who use cell phones or the Internet, problems can be reported to 3-1-1 any time of the day, any day of the week.

3-1-1 Direct is a free mobile application that enables iPhone and Blackberry users to report neighborhood issues directly to the county's 3-1-1 Answer Center using their Smartphones.

From outside of Miami-Dade County, or if you can't reach the Answer Center by dialing 3-1-1, call 305-468-5900. For TDD service call 305-468-5402 or Florida Relay Service at 711.



By dialing 3-1-1 residents get one-on-one personal customer service in English, Spanish or Creole by dialing one easy-to-remember number.