

The Komen Connection

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Cheers to Committing to Health In 2019

Headlines & Helpful Information, Community

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□ The New Year is an exciting time, brimming with the promise of fresh starts and new beginnings. It's also an opportunity to recommit to your health and well-being.

Breast cancer research has shown us that when it comes to reducing the risk of breast cancer, there may be factors that aren't related to genetics or cell biology that we actually CAN control. Healthy lifestyle choices may help lower the risk of different types of cancer and other health conditions, such as heart disease.

It's never too late to begin living a more healthy lifestyle. Here are 3 habits to incorporate as the New Year continues that could have a positive impact on reducing your risk of breast cancer and building a foundation for a long, healthy and happy life.

Maintain a healthy weight. Many studies link body mass index (BMI) to breast cancer risk. Before menopause, being overweight or obese modestly decreases breast cancer risk. After menopause, being overweight or obese increases breast cancer risk. Obesity also can impact breast cancer recurrence. Calculating your BMI is one way you can check if your weight is in a healthy range and is a good motivator to begin adding healthier food choices to your diet.



Get active. Women who regularly exercise have a lower risk of breast cancer than women who don't. When the evidence is looked at as a whole, regular exercise appears to lower breast cancer risk by 10-20 percent. This benefit is seen most clearly in postmenopausal women. Exercise can help with weight control, may lower estrogen levels and boosts the body's immune system so it can help kill or slow the growth of cancer cells. You don't need to do intense exercise to lower your risk of breast cancer. Activity equal to walking 30 minutes a day may lower risk by about 3 percent.



Lower your alcohol intake. A pooled analysis of data from 53 studies found for each alcoholic drink consumed per day, the relevant risk of breast cancer increased about 7 percent. Women who had 2 to 3 alcoholic drinks per day had a 20 percent higher risk of breast cancer compared to women who didn't drink alcohol. Alcohol can change the way a woman's body metabolizes estrogen. This can cause blood estrogen levels to rise. Estrogen levels are higher in women who drink alcohol than in non-drinkers and these higher estrogen levels may in turn, increase the risk of breast cancer. So why risk it? Limit your alcohol intake to no more than 1 drink a day.



Remember, the key to making lifestyle changes that stick is to seek progress not perfection. Start with little steps and build.

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