

Minority Health Cancer Prevention

You have the power to change your life and prevent or delay the onset of cancer during your lifetime. Cancer is the number two cause of death among African-Americans, American Indians and Hispanics/Latinos. These groups are also more likely to have certain types of cancer than the Caucasian population.

Volume 1, Issue 1

September 2007

Question: Just what is cancer?

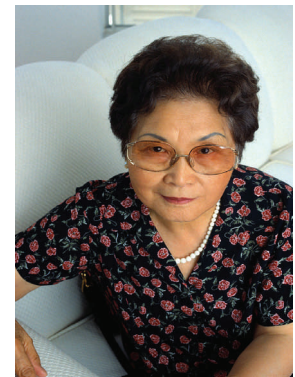
Answer: Cancer is the rapid growth of abnormal cells of the body. Cells are the building blocks of our bodies. It is possible to have cancer that starts in a mole or wart. Cancer may also start in the lungs, breast, prostate, colon, rectum or many other parts of the body. Therefore, it is very important to know the warning signs of cancer.

General Early Warning Signs of Cancer:

- Change in bowel or bladder habits
- A sore that does not heal
- Obvious changes in a mole or wart
- A new bump or thickening in your breast or any part of your body
- Difficulty swallowing or frequent indigestion
- A bothersome cough or hoarseness

Right choices to avoid the chances of cancer:

Making the right choices can prevent or delay the onset of cancer. Learning the correct food choices to eat not only prevent cancer but also help you manage your weight properly. If you do not smoke, do not start. If you do smoke, QUIT. Exercising should become a part of your daily life. The right choices will not only help you feel better, but lead you to a much healthier lifestyle.



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Smoking

If you have never smoked, then your chances of having lung cancer are decreased. If you do smoke, then there are some things you can do to stop smoking:

- Set a target day to stop smoking and mark it on your calendar.
- Get in touch with your healthcare provider or your "Quit" smoking program to see what services are available to help you break the habit.
- On your day to stop smoking, take all the ashtrays and cigarettes from your surroundings and throw away.
- Start the day off with a new attitude. Say to yourself, "This is going to work for me," and repeat it over and over to yourself.
- If you have the tools from your provider for smoking cessation products, have them ready to go. These may include lozenges, patches, gum or medications to stop smoking.
- Know your "triggers" and be prepared. Keep plenty of carrot sticks, celery sticks, suckers, hard candies and gum on hand for those times when you are tempted to use tobacco products such as driving, watching TV or after a meal.



Kentucky has a free "Quit Now Program" which can assist you in breaking the habit of using tobacco products. You can contact the "Quit Now" program at:

1 (800) QUIT NOW
or (1-800-784-8669)

Colors of Healthy Eating

All foods come in a rainbow of colors. People who eat 5 to 9 servings of fruits and vegetables daily have a lower chance of getting cancer.

Vegetables such as collard, mustard, turnip or spinach greens, green cabbage, peas, tomatoes, carrots, squash, okra, corn and broccoli should be included in your daily meals.

Fruits such as strawberries, blueberries, blackberries, red apples, watermelon, peaches, oranges, grapes and bananas are all good for you.

Pinto, red, kidney and white beans can be included daily. Use 100% whole wheat bread instead of regular white bread. Whole grain cereal can be eaten at breakfast with a piece of fruit and skim milk to make a complete meal. Have brown rice with a meal rather than potatoes.

Choose lean meats such as chicken, turkey or fish. Try baking, roasting or broiled meats rather than fried. Meats high in fat such as bacon, ham hocks, fatty pork, beef or lamb should be limited.

Choose fat free dairy products including milk, yogurt and cheese.

Activity/Exercise

It is easy to say you are going to get up tomorrow and begin your day with exercise, but it is much harder to get started. First you should talk to your healthcare provider for approval before starting any type of exercise or activity. Here are some tips on getting started:

- Select the type of exercise you enjoy. These types may include walking, jogging, dancing, gardening, playing outdoor games with your family or other sports activities.
- Make a commitment by choosing a start date and sticking to it.
- Select your most comfortable shoes and clothing to fit the activity.
- If you are just getting started, limit the time you exercise to maybe 15-20 minutes per day, three days per week. Cut back or split the time in half if you become tired or short of breath. It is better to start out slowly and work up than to overdo the first two weeks.
- Increase your exercise time by 5-10 minutes per day until you are exercising three to four times a week for 30 minutes to 1 hour per day.
- Always remember to drink plenty of water before, during and after you exercise.
- Plan to reward yourself at the end of the activity by deep breathing, stretching, and drinking water or a sugar-free beverage and eating a piece of fruit.

How is this activity going to help you? First of all, you will not only feel better physically, but also will have a better overall feeling about yourself and what you have achieved. You will have more energy and you will notice that your weight may decrease and your body becoming stronger.



**REMEMBER TO START YOUR ACTIVITY/EXERCISE PLAN AND STICK TO IT.
PROMOTE A HEALTHIER AND HAPPIER YOU!!**

Alcohol



Avoid alcohol especially if you are pregnant, breastfeeding, taking certain medications or have a health condition that your healthcare provider advises you to avoid any and all alcohol. Check with your healthcare provider on the amount of alcohol that is safe for you. If you feel that you have a problem with how much alcohol you drink, please consult your healthcare provider for help as soon as possible.

Cabinet for Health and Family Services
KyHealth Choices
Medical Management and Quality Assurance
275 E. Main Street, 6C-C
Frankfort, Kentucky 40621

Questions I should ask my healthcare provider:

Women

How often should I have a pap smear and a mammogram?

Men

How often should I have a prostate exam?

Women and Men

How often should I have a colon and a rectal exam?

How often should I do my breast exam?

What should I do if I have drainage from my breast?

What should I do if I have a problem urinating?

What should I do if I see blood in my bowel movement or urine?

