

NUTRITION NEWS

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Cancer Prevention



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April is the month when we're reminded to get regular screenings for cancer. This can include colorectal screenings, breast cancer screenings, skin cancer checkups, and prostate screenings. Cancer remains the second leading cause of death for American adults. It is projected to be the number one cause of early death in the future, in part because people are living longer and their risk of developing cancer increases as we age. As we know, however, there are certain preventive measures we can take to stave off our risk of developing cancer. And dietary changes are one of these measures.

Have you heard of the term "superfood"? A superfood is a food that may actually help you reduce your risk of developing cancer and other diseases. Examples of superfoods include acai berries, goji berries, blueberries, cranberries, and pomegranates. Superfoods are loaded with antioxidants, which are believed to play a major role in warding off cancer. A good rule of thumb is the darker and richer the color of the food, the more antioxidants it contains.

Here is a partial list of superfoods: beans, blueberries, broccoli, oats, oranges, pumpkin, salmon, soy, spinach, tea (green or black), tomatoes, walnuts, and yogurt. A few months ago, aronia berries were the newest superfood to garner media attention. Aronia berries are a naturally tart berry rich in antioxidants. According to the USDA, aronia berries have twice the antioxidants as cranberries and four times as much as pomegranates, strawberries, goji berries, and blueberries.

Aronia berries are found in the Midwestern United States. They are also known as choke berries due to their super tart flavor.



They can be used to make wine, jam, syrups, and tea. You can also stir aronia berries into fresh sauces or smoothies, muffins, and tarts.

Monthly Exercise

Knee raises:

Helps with climbing stairs and getting in and out of cars and buses.

1. With fingertips on something solid to help balance, lift a knee to hip level & hold it for 5 seconds.
2. Repeat with the other leg.
3. Then repeat 8 times.

Colorectal cancer is prevalent in the elderly population. It is now recommended that adults begin getting regular colonoscopies starting at the age of 50. If there is a strong familial history of colorectal cancer, it may be recommended that you begin screenings as early as 40.

As with most cancers, early stages of colorectal cancer often produces few to no symptoms. When symptoms do appear, they often vary with the location and size of the cancer. Often, the first noticeable signs are changes in the frequency, quality, or consistency of bowel movements. This might include feeling like you don't completely empty your bowel or feeling the need to "go" even when you don't need to; frequent fullness, bloating, or cramps; diarrhea or constipation; a difference in the shape of the stool, such as being consistently more narrow; and tarry stools or mucus or blood in the stool.

You may be able to reduce your risk of colorectal cancer by making some lifestyle changes. Maintaining a healthy weight, cessation of smoking, and regular exercise may all play a role in lowering your risk.



However, on this page, we will focus on specific dietary changes you can make that may overall reduce your risk of developing not only colorectal cancers, but cancers in general.

Research is beginning to emerge that shows a strong link between dietary fat and the development of colorectal cancer. High fat consumption increases the amount of certain substances that are released into the digestive tract. These substances are bile acids. Bile acids break down fats. However, when they get into the colon, the large amount of bile acids may be converted to secondary bile acids, which could promote tumor growth, especially in the cells that line the colon.

Another dietary change that could be made to reduce your risk of developing colorectal cancer is to increase your intake of antioxidants. Antioxidants work by defending the body against dangerous substances known as free radicals. The previous page has a partial list of foods high in antioxidants.

In addition to dietary changes, keep in mind the following recommendations to cut your risk of developing all cancers.

- ◆ **Limit alcohol intake:** if you drink, limit your intake to no more than one drink per day.
- ◆ **Don't smoke:** accumulating evidence suggests a link between smoking and many cancers, not just lung cancer.
- ◆ **Control your weight:** being overweight or obese increases your risk of many cancers,.
- ◆ **Be physically active:** physical activity can help you maintain a healthy weight.
- ◆ **Avoid exposure to radiation and environmental pollution:** medical imaging methods, such as CT scans, have linked to cancer. Reduce your exposure by having tests only when absolutely necessary.

Protein plays a key role in a number of different bodily processes. Because the body doesn't store amino acids (the building blocks of protein) like it does fat, the body needs a daily supply of amino acids to continue to make protein.

As we age, our protein needs actually increase slightly. For the average adult over the age of 65, a typical protein goal for daily intake is somewhere between 60 and 80 grams. Certain chronic conditions may require a protein restriction (such as those individuals who have kidney or liver problems), while other conditions actually require a higher daily protein intake (such as people on dialysis or those with skin breakdown such as non-healing wounds).

So what foods are considered good protein sources?

Generally, meat is what we first think of when we think of protein. Chicken, beef, pork seafood, lamb, and even wild game are all excellent sources of protein. One ounce of any of the aforementioned foods generally contain about 7 grams of protein. If you are worried about the amount of saturated fats in these foods, remember that there are often lean varieties. For example, you can buy lean ground beef— some stores carry ground beef that is 93% lean— so that you can get adequate protein without overdoing your fat allowance for the day. Dairy products are also excellent sources of protein. And again, these items are available as low fat or even non-fat (or skim) options. Milk, yogurt, cheeses, and ice cream all contain good protein.

Beans and legumes can also be adequate sources of protein. Beans are generally not

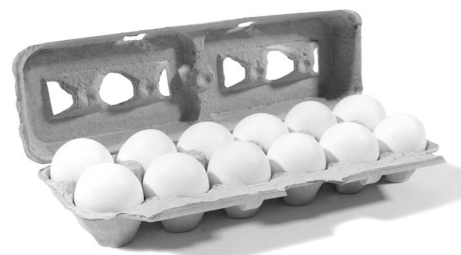


considered a complete protein (such as animal products or meat) but they can still contribute to your overall protein intake. Peanut butter is also an excellent source of protein. While it is high in fat, it can be used sparingly to complement your protein intake. Nuts in general are excellent sources of protein. Almonds, pistachios, cashews, and peanuts can all be incorporated into a healthy diet that will be rich in protein.

Perhaps the best source of protein is eggs. Egg intake was discouraged a number of years ago because eggs are high in cholesterol. However, eggs are the single most bioavailable source of protein that our bodies can utilize. It is now thought that three or less eggs weekly is considered "safe" even if you have a higher than normal cholesterol level. And if you only eat the white of the egg (which while still high in protein is low in cholesterol) there is almost no limit on your intake. Because of their versatility, eggs can easily be incorporated into a moderate diet. They can even be added to casseroles or mixed dishes when you are looking to add a few more calories or grams of protein into your diet because they are virtually undetectable.

Lastly, remember that much of the nutrition of an egg is found in the yolk. Most of the egg's nutrients are in the yolk, and just over 40% of the egg's protein is found in the yolk. Eggs are rich in Vitamins A, B5, B12, folate, choline (for cell health), and lutein (for eye health). The benefits for consuming

eggs are numerous and varied!



Did you know that April 14 is National Pecan Day? We talked about how nuts can be incorporated into your diet to increase your protein intake as well as your antioxidant intake. Here's one of my favorite pecan recipes!

Pecan and Apricot Sourdough Bread Stuffing

- 1 (1 pound) loaf sourdough bread, torn into pieces
- 1/4 cup butter
- 1 cup diced onion
- 1 cup diced celery
- 1 tsp sage
- 4 ounces chopped dried apricots

HEAP

If you received HEAP last year but have not yet received an application for this year, please call our Office at 867-1195.

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- 1 cup toasted pecan halves, chopped
- Salt and freshly ground black pepper to taste
- 2 cups chicken broth
- 1 egg, beaten

Preheat oven to 275 degrees. Butter an 11x14 inch baking dish and set aside to bake the stuffing.

Arrange sourdough bread pieces on a baking sheet. Toast the bread in preheated oven until crisp and dry, 20 to 30 minutes. Remove from the oven to cool, Increase the oven temperature to 350 degrees.

Melt butter in a skillet over medium heat. Stir in the onion and celery; cook and stir until the vegetables are tender, about 10 minutes. Stir in the sage, then stir in the apricots. Turn off the heat, and allow the mixture to rest.

Toss the toasted bread and pecans together in a large bowl. Stir in the celery mixture, then season with salt and pepper. Mix in the chicken broth, one cup at a time. Stir in the egg. Transfer the stuffing to the buttered baking dish.

Bake in the preheated oven until the top is browned, 30 to 35 minutes.

