# What Every Woman Should Know About Cancer Screening\*

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**Take this checklist to your next medical visit and discuss it with your health care provider/clinician. You may need to be tested more frequently based on your medical history and risk. Please closely follow up on your clinician’s advice.**

### Ages 21–29

 **Cervical Cancer Screening**

* Pap test **every 3 years**

### Ages 30–44

**Cervical Cancer Screening**

* Pap test and HPV test/ every 5 years **OR**
* HPV test only every5 years **OR**
* Pap test alone every 3 years

**Breast Cancer Screening/Pre-screening (after age 40)**

* Discuss starting annual mammograms after age 40

### Ages 45–54

**Cervical Cancer Screening**

* Same as age 30-44

 **Breast Cancer Screening**

* Annual mammograms

**Colon Cancer Screening**

* Begin colonoscopies every 5-10 years to check for colon cancer or precancer

### Ages 55 and up

**Breast Cancer Screening**

* Mammograms every 2 yrs **OR**
* Discuss option of keeping annual mammograms

**Cervical Cancer Screening (until age 65)**

* Pap test and HPV test/ every 5 yrs **OR**
* HPV test only every 5 years **OR**
* Pap test alone every 3 yrs

**(**Talk to your clinician about screening after age 65.)

*\* American Cancer Society Guidelines :* [*https://www.cancer.org/healthy/find-cancer-early/cancer-screening-guidelines*/](https://www.cancer.org/healthy/find-cancer-early/cancer-screening-guidelines/) (Source)

**Colon Cancer Screening (until age 75)**

* Colonoscopy every 5-10 years. (Talk to your clinician about screening after age 75)

**Signs and Symptoms**

**The list of signs and symptoms below can also be caused by other conditions. If you have any of these problems, see your clinician immediately! Even better, don’t wait for symptoms to appear—be screened regularly since sometimes cancer does not have symptoms.**

###  Breast Cancer

* A noticeable lump in the breast or under the armpit
* Swelling of all or part of a breast (even if no distinct lump is felt)
* Skin irritation or dimpling
* Breast or nipple pain
* Nipple retraction (turning inward)
* Redness, scaliness, or thickening of the nipple or breast skin
* Nipple discharge (other than breast milk)

### Cervical Cancer

* Abnormal vaginal bleeding, such as bleeding during or after sex (vaginal intercourse) or between menstrual periods
* An unusual discharge from the vagina—the discharge may contain some blood and may occur between your periods or after menopause

### Colon Cancer

* Change in bowel habits (diarrhea, constipation, or narrowing of the stool) lasting for more than a few days
* Feeling that you need to have a bowel movement that's not relieved by having one
* Rectal bleeding with bright red blood, blood in the stool, which may make the stool look dark
* Cramping or abdominal (belly) pain, weakness and fatigue
* Unintended weight loss

# How Can You Reduce Your Risk for Cancer?

**Tips from the American Cancer Society:**

## Get Regular Cancer Screening Tests

Regular screening tests can catch some cancers early, when they’re small, have not spread, and are easier to treat.

With cervical and colon cancers, these tests can even prevent cancer from developing in the first place.

## Get to and Stay at a Healthy Weight

Being overweight or obese is a risk factor for many cancers. You can control your weight through regular exercise and healthy eating.

## Exercise Regularly

## Exercise lowers the risk of several types of cancer, including breast, endometrium, prostate, and colon cancer.

## Adults should get at least 150 minutes of moderate-intensity activity (equal to a brisk walk) or 75 minutes of vigorous activity (makes your heartbeat and breathing faster, and makes you sweat) each week.

## Kids should get at least 1 hour of moderate- or vigorous-intensity activity each day, with vigorous activity at least 3 days a week.

## Get Vaccinated

## Talk with a clinician about vaccines that you can get to protect yourself against certain cervical and liver cancers.

## 5. Eat a Healthy DietEating a variety of different vegetables and fruits, whole grains, and fish or poultry is linked with a lower risk of developing certain cancers. Eat at least 2 ½ cups of vegetables and fruits a day and whole grain breads, pastas, cereals and brown rice. On the other hand, eating more processed and red meat is linked with a higher risk of developing certain cancers. Eat fewer sweets; less red meat (beef, pork, and lamb); less refined grains and white rice; and less processed meat (bacon, sausage, luncheon meats, and hot dogs)

## 6. Avoid Tobacco/SmokingAbout 90% of lung cancer deaths and 30% of all cancer deaths are caused by tobacco use. If you don’t use tobacco products, don’t start. If you do, quit. For help, visit cancer.org/quitsmoking, or call the American Cancer Society at 1-800-227-2345. Also talk to your health care provider to see if you should be screened for lung cancer. 7. Limit AlcoholAlcohol can increase your risk for breast, mouth, throat, voice box, esophagus, liver, colon and rectal cancer. The more alcohol you drink, the higher your risk.

## Men should have no more than 2 drinks a day and women no more than 1.

## One drink is equal to about 12 ounces of beer, 5 ounces of wine, or 1½ ounces of 80-proof liquor.

## 8. Limit Sun ExposurePeople who get a lot of exposure to UV rays are at increased risk of skin cancer. When in the sun, wear a hat, sunscreen and sunglasses to protect your skin and eyes.

Take care of your health! Make an appointment with your doctor today.

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