Reducing Your Cancer Risk Through Physical Activity

Physical activity can reduce your cancer risk by helping you maintain a healthy weight. Physical activities may account for as much as 15 to 40 percent of the calories burned each day. As physical activity increases, your risk decreases for colon, endometrial, breast, lung and pancreatic cancers.

To measure your weight in relation to your height, see the Patient Education document "Body Mass Index."

It is recommended that adults adopt a physically active lifestyle:

- Be moderately active for 30 minutes or more every day.
- As fitness improves, try for at least 60 minutes of moderate activity or 30 minutes of vigorous activity every day.

The table below provides some examples of moderate and vigorous activities. You can also judge the level of an activity by how easy it is to talk. Your body has to work harder to breathe during more intense activity, so talking is more difficult. While participating in moderate activity, you should be able to talk, but not sing. With vigorous activities, you should only be able to talk in short phrases.

Moderate Activities	Vigorous Activities
• Brisk walking (17-minute miles)	• Fast walking (12-minute miles)
• Dancing	• Running
• Slow swimming	• Tennis
• Golf (without a cart)	• Fast cycling
• Weight lifting	• Basketball
• Gardening	• Racquetball
• Yoga	• Gymnastics
• Cycling	• Swimming laps
• Pilates	• Aerobics

The more physically active you are, the better. Plan for a formal workout beyond your normal daily activities. Consider the following ways to add a workout into your day:

- Walk or bike to your destination, rather than driving.
- Take an exercise break at work.

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- Go out dancing with your spouse or friends.
- Use a treadmill or stationary bike while watching TV.
- Join a community sports team.

For More Information

M. D. Anderson Cancer Center – Prevention
http://www.mdanderson.org/prevention
Calculate your personal cancer risk and learn about early detection and current research on preventing cancer.

The American Cancer Society
http://www.cancer.org
Find information on cancer prevention, treatment and support.

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