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Think Pink, Live Strong: Breast Cancer Awareness

For almost 40 years, the country has recognized October as Breast Cancer Awareness Month. Each year in the United States, more than 250,000 cases of breast cancer are diagnosed in women and about 2,400 in men.

The good news is that when breast cancer is detected early, it can be treated more successfully, increasing the chances for survival. While some risk factors such as genetics cannot be controlled, there are several lifestyle changes that can help reduce the risk of developing breast cancer.

Here are some breast cancer prevention tips:

- 1. Maintain a healthy weight:** Obesity and being overweight have been linked to an increased risk of developing breast cancer.
- 2. Exercise regularly:** Aim for at least 150 minutes of moderate-intensity exercise or 75 minutes of vigorous-intensity exercise per week.
- 3. Limit or stop drinking alcohol:** Limit alcohol consumption to no more than one drink per day.
- 4. Quit smoking:** Quitting smoking can help reduce the risk.
- 5. Eat a healthy diet:** Eat plenty of fruits, vegetables and whole grains to help reduce the risk of breast cancer.
- 6. Get regular mammograms:** Regular mammograms can help detect breast cancer early when it is most treatable. Women should begin mammogram screenings at age 40, or earlier if they have a family history of breast cancer.

Rise in Men's Breast Cancer

Breast cancer is mostly found in women but men can get breast cancer too. About 1 out of every 100 breast cancers diagnosed in the United States is found in a man.

Diagnosis of breast cancer in men typically involves a physical exam, imaging tests such as mammography or ultrasound and a biopsy to confirm the presence of cancerous cells. Treatment options may include surgery to remove the cancerous tissue, radiation therapy, chemotherapy or hormone therapy.



Foods That May Help Lower Your Cancer Risk — and Boost Your Overall Health

While there is no specific diet that can guarantee the prevention of breast cancer, eating a balanced diet that includes foods rich in vitamins, minerals and antioxidants is important. Making these healthy lifestyle choices, staying active and maintaining a healthy weight can go a long way in reducing your risk for cancer.

More good news — the tips below are also beneficial to your overall health and reduce your risk of other chronic diseases, too:

- 1. Eat a diet high in fruits and vegetables:** Fruits and vegetables contain antioxidants, vitamins and minerals that may help reduce the risk of breast cancer. Aim for at least five servings of fruits and vegetables per day.
- 2. Choose lean proteins:** Choose lean proteins such as fish, poultry, beans and lentils over red meat and processed meats.
- 3. Limit alcohol consumption:** Alcohol consumption has been linked to an increased risk of breast cancer. Limit alcohol consumption to no more than one drink per day.
- 4. Reduce saturated and trans fats:** Saturated and trans fats have been linked to an increased risk of breast cancer. Choose healthy fats such as those found in nuts, seeds and avocados, and limit the consumption of foods high in saturated and trans fats.
- 5. Eat whole grains:** Whole grains such as whole wheat, brown rice and quinoa are a good source of fiber and may help reduce the risk of breast cancer.
- 6. Choose low-fat dairy products:** Dairy products contain calcium, which may help reduce the risk of breast cancer. Choose low-fat dairy products such as skim milk, low-fat yogurt and low-fat cheese.
- 7. Limit sugar and processed foods:** Diets high in sugar and processed foods have been linked to an increased risk of breast cancer. Choose whole, minimally processed foods as much as possible.

Enjoy These Fruits and Veggies in October

Here are some of the delicious seasonal fruits and vegetables to work into your healthy meal plan this fall:

Fruits

- Apples
- Dates
- Figs
- Pears
- Grapes
- Cranberries
- Persimmons
- Pomegranates
- Quinces

Vegetables

- Pumpkins
- Winter squash (acorn, butternut, delicata, etc.)
- Sweet potatoes
- Broccoli
- Cauliflower
- Brussels sprouts
- Cabbage
- Carrots
- Beets
- Turnips
- Radishes
- Sweet corn
- Spinach





Navigating Your Employee Benefits for 2024

It's time to choose your benefits for the upcoming year. A good first step is to review your employer's benefit communications that tell you what's new or changing for 2024. You'll also be able to view all of the benefit options and resources available to you.

Here are some tips to help you make.

1. Start by reviewing your current elections and note any that you didn't use or didn't need. This will help you identify any areas where you may want to make changes.
2. Consider your current and future needs. Think about any upcoming medical procedures or changes in your family situation, such as having a baby or a child leaving home.
3. Review the options available to you and compare the costs and benefits of each plan. Look at the deductibles, co-pays and premiums for Medical, Dental and Vision plans. Consider the options for Life insurance, Disability insurance and Retirement plans. Make sure to also consider any tax benefits.
4. Take any wellness programs that can help you save money on your healthcare costs, such as discounts on gym memberships, weight loss programs or smoking cessation programs.

If you're unsure about your options or have questions, talk to your human resources representative.

Fall Fitness: How Exercising Outdoors Can Improve Your Mood

For most of the country, the autumn season brings cooler temperatures, changing leaves and shorter days. For some people, these changes can cause a dip in mood and energy levels. However, research has shown that exercising outdoors during fall can have a positive impact on mental health and overall well-being.

One of the key reasons for this is the power of nature. Spending time outdoors and surrounded by nature has been found to have a calming and restorative effect on the mind and body. This is particularly true during fall when the colors of the changing leaves and the crisp air create a serene and peaceful environment.

Outdoor exercise can help ward off seasonal affective disorder (SAD), depression and anxiety because sunshine naturally increases serotonin, a hormone that affects your mood. And exercise itself produces endorphins, another feel-good hormone that boosts your mood and reduces pain. When combined with the benefits of nature, the effects of exercise can be even more pronounced.

There are many ways to get active outdoors during fall. Hiking, walking, cycling and running are all great options. These activities allow you to explore the beauty of the season while getting your heart rate up and reaping the mental health benefits of exercise.

Exercising outdoors can become a lot more fun if you involve family and friends. Instead of meeting a friend for lunch or coffee, consider going for a walk. Or take your family out for a walk together instead of watching TV after dinner.

Next time you're feeling down or in need of a mental health boost, lace up your shoes and head outdoors for a refreshing fall workout.



Kindness: The Secret to a Happier Life

"No act of kindness, no matter how small, is ever wasted." —Aesop

We all know that it's good to be kind to others. Kindness is an important virtue for sustaining relationships, which helps to build a trusting and cooperative society.

You may have also heard that kindness makes you happier and healthier. A recently published review of decades of kindness research agree that being who are kind tend to have higher well-being.

For example, in the UK, researchers found that being kind could boost happiness in as little as three days. The study assigned people to three groups: the first group had to do an act of kindness each day; the second tried a new activity and the third did nothing. Those who were kind and did new things saw a significant boost in happiness.

You'll experience even greater joy if you're creative with your acts of kindness. Happiness researchers Sonja Lyubomirsky and Kennon Sheldon found that people who did a variety of acts of kindness throughout the week showed greater increases in happiness than those who performed the same activity over and over again.

And here's the good news: It seems acts of kindness can be anonymous or visible, spontaneous or planned, and can be as simple as giving a compliment or opening a door for someone.



Kindness suggestions

There are literally hundreds of ideas on the internet on how to practice kindness, but here are a few to get you started:

Smile at someone and say hello.

- Write a letter or send a care package to a friend or family member who lives far away.
- Listen attentively to someone who needs to talk.
- Leave a generous tip for your server at a restaurant.
- Share a funny or heartwarming story with someone who could use a pick-me-up.
- Leave a positive note or message for someone to find.
- Send a thank-you card or message to someone who has made a difference in your life.