

Nutrition Prevention for Colon Cancer

What is colon cancer?

Colon cancer is an abnormal growth of cells in the large intestine or the colon. When cells in the colon fail to grow, divide and reproduce in a healthy way, abnormal tissue is provided and a growth called a polyp is formed. These polyps can grow and become malignant (cancerous) growths that can spread to other parts of the body.

What you can do to prevent colon cancer

1. Stay lean. Achieve and maintain a health weight.
 - Be physically active. Activity stimulates movement through the bowel, reducing the length of time that bowel lining is exposed to mutagens.
 - Avoid obesity or gaining weight. Obesity increases the risk of colon cancer.
2. Eat more fruits, vegetables, and grains.
 - Choose most of the foods you eat from plant sources.
 - Choose whole grains in preference to refined grains.
 - Choose beans as an alternative to meat.
 - Eat seven or more servings of fruits and vegetables each day.
3. Limit high-fat foods
 - Replace fat-rich foods with fruits and vegetables.
 - Eat smaller portions of high-fat foods.
 - Bake and broil instead of fry.
 - Select non-fat and low-fat milk and dairy products.
 - Select lean cuts of meat.
 - Choose beans, seafood, and poultry as an alternative to beef, pork, and lamb.
 - Avoid large quantities of red meat.
4. Make sure you meet your dietary requirements for calcium. Most people need more than 1,000 mg/day but often get only half of that from food.
5. Take a multiple vitamin that has folate. Make sure you get 400 mcg (total from food and supplement). The evidence suggests you need to take the supplement for at least 15 years to help prevent tumor progression.
6. Limit alcohol consumption. If you do drink, no more than 2 drinks per day for a man and 1 for a woman.
 - No more than one 12 ounce beer, 5 ounce glass of wine or 1 ½ ounce of spirits is a drink.
7. Eat more dietary fiber. Eat 14 grams for every 1,000 calories you eat.
 - Fiber has been shown to decrease the amount of time cancer-causing agents remain in the digestive tract.
 - Fiber has been found to exert protective effects on the lining of the colon.
 - Fruits and vegetables are high in fiber, especially in the skin.
 - Some cereals are an efficient source of fiber, providing 5 or more grams of dietary fiber per serving.
 - Some dietary supplements are good sources of fiber. Read the Nutrition Facts label.
8. Don't smoke.

More information:

- The American Cancer Society has more information about colon cancer.
Call **1-800-4-CANCER** or visit www.cancer.org
- The American Institute for Cancer Research www.aicr.org
- National Cancer Institute
Cancer Information Service **1-800-4-CANCER**
www.cancer.gov
- United Ostomy Association (UOA)
1-800-826-0826 or **714-660-8624**
Internet address: www.uoa.org