

Steps to reduce your cancer risk



Physical Activity

- Physical activity reduces risk of bowel, breast and womb cancer
- Aim for at least 150 minutes of moderate physical activity or 75 minutes of vigorous activity across a week
- Moderate physical activity makes you a little out of breath but you can talk comfortably
- Vigorous activities will raise your heart rate, make you sweat and feel out of breath



Breastfeeding

- Breastfeeding reduces levels of certain hormones in the body and protects cells in the breast from changes, reducing breast cancer risk
- The greater the number of months spent breastfeeding, the greater the protection
- If you can, breastfeed your baby



Eating for Health

- Eating fruit, vegetables and wholegrains provide the body with antioxidants, vitamins and minerals that protect your body
- Red and processed meat contain chemicals that increase risk of bowel cancer. Aim to reduce the amount of red meat you eat as much as possible, to no more than 3 portions per week, and try to avoid processed meat altogether
- Coffee may reduce risk of some cancers, including liver cancer
- Choosing healthy food and avoiding 'fast-foods, sugary drinks and sweets helps maintain a healthy body weight which decreases risk of cancer



HRT

- Certain hormonal medications, including the Oral Contraceptive Pill (OCP) and hormone replacement therapy (HRT) can increase and decrease the risk of cancers for women
- Talk to your GP about whether these medications are right for you



Skin Protection

- To reduce risk of skin cancer protect your skin from the sun and never use sunbeds
- Follow the Healthy Ireland SunSmart steps, especially from April to September, even when it is cloudy
 - Slip on clothing that covers your skin
 - Slop on sunscreen, using factor 30+ for adults and 50+ for children
 - Slap on a wide-brimmed hat
 - Seek shade and always use a sunshade on a child's buggy
 - Slide on sunglasses to protect your eyes



Workplace

- Some workplaces involve exposure to cancer causing substances, such as arsenic, asbestos, ultraviolet radiation
- Follow your workplace health and safety instructions to help reduce the risk of your exposure to cancer-causing substances in your workplace



Alcohol

- When alcohol is broken down in your body, it can damage your body's cells
- It increases the risk of at least 7 types of cancer, including mouth, throat, breast, stomach and liver
- You can reduce your risk of cancer if you do not drink alcohol
- The less you drink the lower the risk



Body Weight

- Too much body weight can affect hormone levels and your immune system, increasing your risk of cancer
- Maintain a healthy body weight throughout your lifetime, from childhood to adulthood to reduce your risk of 12 types of cancer



Radon

- Radon is a naturally occurring gas found in the environment. It can increase risk of lung cancer in people exposed to high levels of radon over long periods of time
- If you are a smoker and you live in a high radon area your risk of lung cancer is increased, so it is even more important to think about quitting smoking
- The [Environmental Protection Agency website](#) provides information on how to check your home for radon gas levels. It also provides advice on how to reduce levels in your home if you need to



Smoking

- Tobacco contains chemicals that cause cancer. Tobacco products include cigarettes, roll your own, chewing tobacco, pipes or cigars. Quitting tobacco products reduces your risk of at least 15 types of cancer including lung cancer, which is the biggest cause of cancer death in Ireland
- For support to quit smoking go to www.quit.ie or call 1800 201 203

Second Hand Smoke

- Second hand tobacco smoke increases cancer risk
- Make your home and car smoke free



Vaccines

- Vaccinations can protect against some kinds of cancer
- HPV is a virus that can cause a range of cancers including cervical, penis, anal, mouth and throat cancer. The HPV vaccine protects against the HPV virus. The HPV vaccine is offered to all girls and boys in secondary school to reduce cancer risk
- Hepatitis B vaccine protects against liver cancer. It is offered to all newborns in Ireland

Irish Cancer Prevention Network



Contact prevention@cancercontrol.ie for more information