

WellNet Interactive's Healthy Newsletter

October 2011

Breast Cancer Prevention-Reduce Your Risk

If you're concerned about breast cancer, you may be wondering if there are steps you can take toward breast cancer prevention. Understand the lifestyle factors that may affect your risk of breast cancer and what you can do to stay healthy.



Breast cancer prevention begins with various factors you can control. For example:

- **Limit alcohol.** The more alcohol you drink, the greater your risk of developing breast cancer. If you choose to drink alcohol — including beer, wine or liquor — limit yourself to no more than one drink a day.
- **Control your weight.** Being overweight or obese increases the risk of breast cancer. This is especially true if obesity occurs later in life, particularly after menopause.
- **Get plenty of physical activity.** Being physically active can help you maintain a healthy weight, which, in turn, helps prevent breast cancer. For most healthy adults, the Department of Health and Human Services recommends at least 150 minutes a week of moderate aerobic activity (think brisk walking or swimming) or 75 minutes of vigorous aerobic activity (such as running), in addition to strength training exercises at least twice a week. If you're just starting a physical activity program, start slowly and build intensity gradually.
- **Discontinue hormone therapy.** Long-term combination hormone therapy increases the risk of breast cancer. If you're taking hormone therapy for menopausal symptoms, ask your doctor about other options. You may be able to manage your symptoms with non-hormonal therapies, such as physical activity. If you decide that the benefits of short-term hormone therapy outweigh the risks, consider using the lowest dose that's effective for your symptoms, and plan to use it only temporarily.
- **Avoid exposure to environmental pollution.** While further studies are needed, some research suggests a link between breast cancer and exposure to the polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons found in vehicle exhaust and air pollution.

Research shows that eating a diet rich in fruits and vegetables doesn't offer direct protection from breast cancer. In addition, a recent study of dietary fat and breast cancer showed only a slight decrease in the risk of invasive breast cancer for women who ate a low-fat diet. However, eating a healthy diet may decrease your risk of other diseases, such as diabetes, cardiovascular disease and stroke. A healthy diet can also help you maintain a healthy weight — a key factor in breast cancer prevention. Be vigilant about breast cancer detection. If you notice any changes in your breasts, such as a new lump or skin changes, consult your doctor for an evaluation. Also, ask your doctor when to begin mammograms and other screening procedures to detect breast cancer.

By: Mayo Clinic Staff

Pumpkin Soup Serves 4



Ingredients

3/4 cup water
1 small onion, chopped
1 can (8 ounces) pumpkin puree
1 cup unsalted vegetable broth
1/2 teaspoon ground cinnamon
1/4 teaspoon ground nutmeg
1 cup fat-free milk
1/8 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
1 green onion, green top only, chopped

Directions

In a large saucepan, heat 1/4 cup of the water over medium heat. Add the onion and cook until tender, about 3 minutes. Don't let the onion dry out. Add the remaining water, pumpkin, broth, cinnamon and nutmeg. Bring to a boil, reduce heat and simmer for 5 minutes. Stir in the milk and cook until hot. Don't boil. Ladle into warmed individual bowls and garnish with black pepper and green onion tops. Serve immediately.