

LIFESTYLE HABITS THAT LOWER BREAST CANCER RISK

by Carla Hill

Breast cancer is one of the most common cancers among women worldwide, but the good news is that certain lifestyle habits can help reduce your risk. Here are some simple, research-backed habits that can lower your risk of breast cancer.

1. Get Regular Physical Activity

Staying active is one of the best ways to lower your risk of breast cancer. The American Cancer Society recommends at least 150 minutes of moderate exercise or 75 minutes of vigorous exercise per week. Activities like brisk walking, cycling, or yoga can boost your immune system and help maintain a healthy weight.

2. Get Plenty of Vitamin D

Vitamin D in particular has been linked to a reduced risk of breast cancer. The RDA in the United States is 600 IU daily.



Woman resting during exercise

3. Prioritize Healthy Sleep

Getting 7-9 hours of quality sleep each night plays a critical role in maintaining hormonal balance and immune system function, both of which can impact breast cancer risk. Poor sleep can disrupt the body's production of melatonin, a hormone that helps regulate estrogen levels.

4. Limit Alcohol Consumption

Studies show that alcohol consumption increases breast cancer risk. Even small amounts of alcohol can increase estrogen levels and potentially damage DNA. Limiting yourself to no more than one drink per day or cutting out alcohol entirely can significantly reduce your risk.

5. Eat a Balanced Diet

A diet rich in fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and lean proteins can help lower cancer risk. Cruciferous vegetables like broccoli, cauliflower, and kale contain compounds that may help reduce cancer risk. Reducing processed foods and sugar intake also supports overall health and weight management.

7. Stay on Top of Screenings

While lifestyle changes are important, regular mammograms and self-exams remain crucial for early detection. Talk to your doctor about the best screening schedule for your age and risk level.

5. Don't Smoke

There is growing evidence that smoking increases the risk of breast cancer, particularly in premenopausal women. Quitting smoking benefits your overall health and lowers your risk for many types of cancer, including breast cancer.

While genetics and family history play a role in breast cancer risk, many factors are within your control. By adopting healthier lifestyle habits—like staying active, eating well, and limiting alcohol—you can take meaningful steps to reduce your risk. Small changes in your daily routine can add up to a healthier future.