



CANCER SURVIVORS' 8IGHTWAYS[®]

to stay healthy after cancer



HEALING
MIND, BODY,
& SPIRIT



8IGHT

healthy behaviors for cancer survivors

Millions of cancer survivors are living longer and better lives by making healthy decisions. Although, cancer is the leading cause of death among American Indians and Alaska Native peoples, these eight “ways” can be your guide to enjoying many health-filled years that most cancer survivors enjoy. Your doctor and your traditions can help guide you, but the only limitation, really, is when you want to start. Begin with one or two; once you’ve got those down, move on to the others.

1. Don't Smoke

Tobacco has a traditional, spiritual and medicinal role in Native cultures. However, if you smoke, the single best thing you can do as a survivor is stop. It'll lower your risk of developing a second cancer as well as heart disease and stroke. Smoking also puts the hearts and lungs of your children, family and friends at risk.

Tips

- Keep trying! It often takes 6 or 7 tries before you quit for good.
- Talk to a health care provider for help, it can double your chances of success.
- Suggested resource: keepitsacred.itcmi.org or call 906-632-6896 x106 for extra help.
- Join a quit-smoking program. Your workplace or health plan may offer one.

2. Avoid Secondhand Smoke

Stay away from secondhand smoke. Spending time in smoky places can further raise the risk of cancer as well as heart disease.

Tips

- Avoid smoky bars and restaurants.
- Try to work in a smoke-free workplace.
- Make your house “non-smoking” and don't give in, not to spouses, kids, or friends.

3. Exercise Regularly

The benefits of regular activity make it well worth the effort to fit it in, even for those in the middle of treatment. It not only boosts health but also improves mood and helps counter cancer-related fatigue. Regular exercise may lower the risk of recurrence and help cut the risk of other chronic diseases.

Try to get at least 30 minutes of aerobic activity (like brisk walking) every day. More is even better. It's also important to fit in strength training. Build up to 2 or more times per week.

Tips

- Choose activities you enjoy. Many things count as exercise, like walking, gardening, and Pow Wow dancing.
- Make exercise a habit by setting aside the same time for it each day—try going to the gym each day at lunchtime or taking a walk regularly after dinner.
- Stay motivated by exercising with someone.
- Start slowly with any new program and don't be shy about asking for help.

4. Maintain a Healthy Weight

With the stress, treatment side effects, and changes to life's routine that a cancer diagnosis can bring, it can be hard for survivors to keep weight in check. Still, maintaining a healthy weight — or at a minimum, not gaining weight — is an important goal that all survivors should shoot for. Next to not smoking, it's the single most important thing you can do to improve your health and quality of life.

Tips

- Limit time in front of the TV and computer.
- Integrate physical activity and movement into your life.
- Eat a diet rich in fruits, vegetables, and whole grains.
- Choose smaller portions, and eat more slowly.

5. Eat a Healthy Diet

Healthy eating is the same for cancer survivors as it is for everyone else. A healthy diet can help keep weight in check, give your body the nutrients it needs, and the energy you need to make it through a busy day.

A great way to maintain a healthy diet is to incorporate ancestral foods in your diet. Dishes that incorporate the three sisters are nutritious and low in fat. Taking a 100% DV multivitamin with folate everyday will also help ensure you get all of your daily nutrients.

Tips

- Make fruits and vegetables a part of every meal. Put fruit on your cereal. Eat vegetables as a snack.
- Choose chicken, fish, or beans, instead of red meat.
- Choose whole-grain cereal, brown rice, and whole-wheat bread over more refined choices.
- Choose dishes made with olive or canola oil, which are high in healthy fats.
- Cut back on fast food and fried foods (like frybread), which are high in bad fats.
- Follow food safety steps to avoid food poisoning.

6. Avoid Drinking Alcohol

Alcohol can be a complicated issue, especially for survivors. If you don't drink, don't feel the need to start. If you do, keep it to moderate levels (1 drink/day for women; 1–2 drinks/day for men). Those who drink more should cut back.

Tips

- Choose non-alcoholic beverages at meals and parties.
- Avoid occasions centered around alcohol.
- Talk to a health care professional if you feel you have a problem with alcohol.

7. Stay Connected With Friends, Family, Traditions, and Other Survivors

There is real power in staying connected with friends, family, traditions, and other cancer survivors. Keeping up and building on a social network can significantly improve

quality of life, and possibly even prognosis, in cancer survivors. Even in those with great support from family and friends, cancer can seem isolating, so it can take some effort to keep up these relationships.

Tips

- Spend time each week to get together with friends or family.
- Go regularly to survivors' support groups, which can be great places to share feelings and concerns with those who've been through similar things.
- Use technology to your advantage. Social media, real-time video, and good old-fashioned telephones and email are great ways to connect with family, friends, and other survivors.
- Attend traditional ceremonies such as smudges or sweat lodges.

8. Get Screening Tests and Go to Your Regular Check-Ups

As a survivor, there's nothing more important than going to your regular post-treatment check-ups with your primary care doctor and oncology team. These visits are not only key to your health as a survivor but also great places to share any concerns or questions you have about your health. Become a team with your doctors to manage your health needs.

Don't forget to talk to your doctor about tests that screen for:

- Breast cancer
- Colon cancer
- Cervical cancer
- Lung cancer (if history of heavy smoking)
- Hepatitis C (if born 1945 – 65)
- High blood sugar
- High blood pressure
- Unhealthy blood cholesterol
- Osteoporosis

Also key is keeping up with any medications you've been prescribed — both those related to your cancer and to other health issues. If you're having trouble sticking with your medications, talk to your provider. Together, you can make a plan to get back on track.

Online Resources

8 Ways to Prevent Cancer
the8ways.org

**Surgeon General—
My Family Health Portrait**
familyhistory.hhs.gov

NIH—Body Mass Index Calculator
tinyurl.com/nhlbibmi

National Cancer Institute
cancer.gov

American Cancer Society
cancer.org

SmokeFree.gov
smokefree.gov

American Indian Cancer Foundation
keepitsacred.itcmi.org



Siteman Cancer Center Locations

Washington University Medical Campus
4921 Parkview Place
St. Louis, MO 63110

St. Charles County
150 Entrance Way
St. Peters, MO 63376

North St. Louis County
11125 Dunn Road, Suite 100
St. Louis, MO 63136

West St. Louis County
10 Barnes West Drive, Physician Office Building, 2
Creve Coeur, MO 63141

South St. Louis County
5225 Midamerica Plaza
St. Louis, MO 63129

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Pažnja: Dostupne su vam besplatne usluge jezičke pomoći. Nazovite 314-747-5682 (TTY - Telefon za osobe sa oštećenim govorom ili sluhom: 1-800-735-2966).