

Road to **WELLfluent**TM

Embrace better health

October is National Breast Cancer Awareness Month

How Can I Lower My Risk of Breast Cancer?

There is no sure way to prevent breast cancer. But there are things you can do that might lower your risk, such as changing risk factors that are under your control.

A risk factor is anything that increases your chances of getting a disease, such as cancer. But having a risk factor, or even many, does not mean that you are sure to get the disease. While you can't change some breast cancer risk factors—family history and aging, for example—there are some risk factors that you can control.

Get to and stay at a healthy weight:

Both increased body weight and weight gain as an adult are linked with a higher risk of breast cancer after menopause. The American Cancer Society recommends you stay at a healthy weight throughout your life and avoid excess weight gain by balancing your food intake with physical activity.

Be physically active:

Many studies have shown that moderate to vigorous physical activity is linked with lower breast cancer risk, so it's important to get regular physical activity. The American Cancer Society recommends that adults get at least 150 to 300 minutes of moderate intensity or 75 to 150 minutes of vigorous intensity activity each week (or a combination of these), preferably spread throughout the week. Getting to or exceeding the upper limit of 300 minutes is ideal.

Avoid or limit alcohol:

Alcohol increases risk of breast cancer. Even drinking small amounts of alcohol has been linked with an increase in risk. It is best not to drink alcohol at all. For women who do drink, they should have no more than 1 alcoholic drink a day. A drink is 12 ounces of beer, 5 ounces of wine, or 1.5 ounces of 80-proof distilled spirits (hard liquor).

Other factors that might lower risk:

Women who choose to breastfeed for at least several months after childbirth may also get an added benefit of reducing their breast cancer risk.



Using hormone therapy after menopause can increase your risk of breast cancer. To avoid this, talk to your health care provider about non-hormonal options to treat menopausal symptoms.

Knowing how your breasts normally look and feel is an important part of your breast health and should report any changes to a health care provider right away.

The most common symptom of breast cancer is a **new lump or mass** (although most breast lumps are not cancer). A painless, hard mass that has irregular edges is more likely to be cancer, but breast cancers can be also soft, round, tender, or even painful.

Other possible symptoms of breast cancer include:

- Swelling of all or part of a breast (even if no lump is felt)
- Skin dimpling (sometimes looking like an orange peel)
- Breast or nipple pain
- Nipple retraction (turning inward)
- Nipple or breast skin that is red, dry, flaking, or thickened

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- Nipple discharge (other than breast milk)
- Swollen lymph nodes under the arm or near the collar bone (Sometimes this can be a sign of breast cancer spread even before the original tumor in the breast is large enough to be felt.)

Many of these symptoms can also be caused by benign (non-cancerous) breast conditions. Still, **it's important to have any new breast mass, lump, or other change checked by an experienced health care professional** so the cause can be found and treated, if needed.

Early Detection and Screening:

Breast cancer that's found early, when it's small and has not spread, is easier to treat successfully. Getting regular screening tests is **the most reliable** way to find breast cancer early.

These guidelines are for women at **average risk** for breast

cancer. For screening purposes, a woman is considered to be at average risk if she doesn't have a personal history of breast cancer, a strong family history of breast cancer, or a genetic mutation known to increase risk of breast cancer (and has not had chest radiation therapy before the age of 30).

- **Women between 40 and 44** have the option to start screening with a mammogram every year.
- **Women 45 to 54** should get mammograms every year.
- **Women 55 and older** can switch to a mammogram every other year, or they can choose to continue yearly mammograms. Screening should continue as long as a woman is in good health and is expected to live at least 10 more years.

Source: **Breast Cancer Risk Factors and Prevention Methods**

Happy Hauntings: 13 Tips for a Healthy Halloween

In observance of Halloween, here's a baker's dozen ways to prepare and protect your family's health and safety during trick or treat.

Treat smarts

All treats and no tricks make Halloween enjoyable for everyone.

1. Eat only factory-wrapped treats. If you have any doubt about the safety of a treat, throw it out.
2. Carrying a glow stick is one way to see and be seen as night wears on, but did you know that the luminescent liquid inside a glow stick is minimally toxic in small amounts? Do not allow children to chew on glow sticks.
3. Children are curious and put all sorts of things in their mouths. Confusing medicine with candies can make Halloween go from spooky to scary. Practice safe medication storage.
4. Halloween can be tricky for children with food allergies. Parents: always read labels (avoid treats without labels), carry an epinephrine auto-injector (if prescribed), and learn more about the Teal Pumpkin Project®, an initiative started by Food Allergy Research and Education to provide non-food treats, such as stickers, school supplies, and small toys, to kids with allergies.
5. Prepare your trick or treater with trick or treat safety items: a flashlight, reflective tape or strips applied to costumes and candy bags, and an emergency contact information card in case they get lost or separated from the group.

Street smarts

The frightening fact is that, on average, children are more than twice as likely to be hit by a car and killed on Halloween than on any other day of the year. Here are a few important rules of the road to share with your costumed pedestrians before stepping out.



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6. Trick or treat as part of a large group with a responsible adult.
7. Walk on sidewalks whenever possible, or on the far edge of the road facing traffic to stay safe.
8. Look both ways before crossing the street at a crosswalk or intersection.
9. Walk, don't run between houses to avoid trips and falls.

Caution with costumes

Your little princess or goblin is itching to hit the trick-or-treat trail, but is their costume safe? One Size Does Not fit all.

10. Decorative contact lenses without a prescription are NOT a good fit and can lead to these nightmares: Eye Infections, eye scratches, eye sores, vision loss
11. Painting your face can be fun alternative to wearing a mask. Test novelty makeups in small area on the arm to test for an allergic reaction before applying it to your face. Remove all makeup according to the manufacturers' instructions before bedtime to prevent possible skin and eye irritation. Make sure costumes fit well to avoid blocked vision and help prevent trips and falls.
12. Choose costume accessories that are short, soft (i.e., made of plastic or foam) and flexible.

Source: <https://blogs.cdc.gov/publichealthmatters/2019/10/halloweentips/>

GLOBAL HANDWASHING DAY

Global Handwashing Day is celebrated every year on October 15th.

What are the benefits of hand hygiene?

- Handwashing with soap can reduce diarrheal diseases by 30%.
- Handwashing with soap can reduce acute respiratory infections by up to 20%.
- Handwashing with plays an important role in reducing the transmission of outbreak-related pathogens such as cholera, Ebola, shigellosis, SARS, hepatitis E, and COVID-19. Hand hygiene is protective against healthcare associated infections and reduces the spread of antimicrobial resistance.
- Hand hygiene may contribute to the reduction of Neglected Tropical Diseases.
- Hand hygiene can help reduce the transmission of a range of diseases.
- Handwashing has also been linked to benefits beyond disease reduction, such as reduced rates of school absenteeism and recently, programs aimed at encouraging older children to perform regular handwashing in school have been central to safe school reopening strategies and preventing school closures.



Source: <https://globalhandwashing.org/global-handwashing-day/>

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