

Prostate Cancer: Prevention



Although there is no secret trick to staying cancer-free, there are ways to lower your chances of getting prostate cancer. In some cases, a healthcare provider may suggest using medicine to reduce your risk (see below). But there are also plenty of steps you can take on your own, no prescription needed.

Building a healthy lifestyle goes a long way in lowering your risk for prostate cancer. Here's what to focus on—and a few tips to help you get started:

- **Eat fruits and vegetables every day.** Include tomatoes, broccoli, cauliflower, and cabbage. Also include beans, peas, and lentils. These foods may lower the risk for prostate cancer, but more research is needed.
- **Save high-fat meals and high-fat dairy for special occasions.** Limit foods like hamburgers, sausage, cheese, and ice cream. Instead eat lean meats, fish, and low-fat or nonfat dairy foods.
- **Use caution with calcium.** Too much calcium may raise your risk for prostate cancer slightly. Normal amounts of calcium in dairy foods and drinks are fine. But talk with your healthcare provider before you take calcium supplements.
- **Find ways to move more.** Pick physical activities you enjoy and can see yourself doing for at least 30 minutes on most days. To help you stay accountable—and to make things more fun—invite friends or family along!
- **Stay at a weight that supports your health goals.** Extra weight is linked to a higher risk for a more serious type of prostate cancer. Choosing healthy foods and adding movement to each day will help. Ask your healthcare provider for help staying at or getting to your goal weight.

If you are feeling overwhelmed, that's OK. Remember: You don't have to change everything overnight. Gradually introduce new habits into your life. Make it a goal to try lots of different foods and activities to find what you like best. And most important, know that the best healthy habits are the ones you can maintain.

How can medicine help?

Some people have a higher risk for prostate cancer because of things like age, race, genetics, and family history. If you are at an increased risk, your healthcare provider may talk with you about taking medicines called 5-alpha-reductase inhibitors (5-ARIs). These medicines are finasteride and dutasteride. They come as tablets or capsules that you swallow.

These medicines are most often used to treat an enlarged prostate that does not have cancer. This is called benign prostatic hyperplasia. Certain studies have shown that these medicines may lower prostate cancer risk. But they sometimes have unpleasant side effects. The FDA has **not** approved 5-ARIs to specifically prevent prostate cancer. Ask your healthcare provider about the risks and benefits of these medicines and whether they're right for you.

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