SOUTH CENTRAL PENNSYLVANIA
HEALTH CARE QUALITY UNIT

It's Your Health
Fall 2021

the Advocacy Alliance
Toll Free 1-877-315-6855
www.theadvocacyalliance.org

BREAST CANCER: THINGS YOU SHOULD KNOW

TAKEN FROM CDC, CANCER PREVENTION WORKS

THERE ARE THINGS YOU SHOULD KNOW TO UNDERSTAND WHAT BREAST CANCER IS, KNOW YOUR CHANCES FOR GETTING IT, AND HOW TO FIND IT EARLY. Finding breast cancer early is critical because when it is found early, it is easier to treat. Read to learn more about the common symptoms of breast cancer and the best way many women find breast cancer early.

WHAT IS BREAST CANCER?

Breast cancer is the second most common cancer among women, after skin cancer. It is a disease in which cells in the breast grow out of control. Cancer cells can also spread, or *metastasize,* to other parts of the body.

WHAT SYMPTOMS SHOULD I LOOK FOR?

* Some warning signs of breast cancer are:
* New lump in the breast or underarm (armpit).
* Thickening or swelling of part of the breast.
* Irritation or dimpling of breast skin.
* Redness or flaky skin in the nipple area or the breast.
* Pulling in of the nipple.
* Nipple discharge other than breast milk, including blood.
* Any change in the size or shape of the breast.
* Pain in the breast.

These symptoms can happen with other conditions that are not cancer. If you notice any of these symptoms, talk to your health care provider right away.

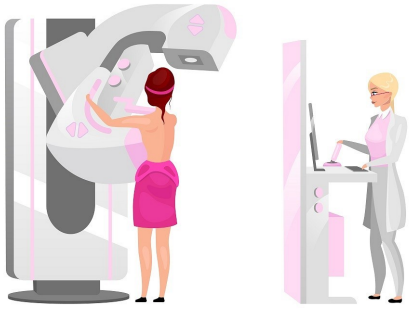
HCQU Trainings

Our Health Care Quality Unit is always available for trainings for groups large and small. In addition to group trainings, we offer web trainings 24 hours a day/7 days per week. If you are interested in scheduling a training, or have any questions about web trainings, please contact Katie Freeman, R.N., Director, South Central PA Health Care Quality Unit at kf1@theadvocacyalliance.org or toll-free at 1-877-315-6855.

For a list of our current web trainings please go to www.southcentralpa-hcqu.org/Trainings/trainings.htm.

What can I do to find breast cancer early?

Breast cancer screening involves checking a woman's breasts for cancer before there are signs or symptoms of the disease.



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A mammogram is an X-ray picture of the breast.

Doctors use a mammogram to look for early signs of breast cancer. The United States Preventive Services Task Force (USPSTF) recommends that most women who are at average risk and are 50 to 74 years old get one every 2 years. USPSTF recommendations state that women with a parent, sibling, or child with breast cancer are at a higher risk for breast cancer and may benefit from beginning screening in their 40s. Weighing the benefits and risks of screening is important when considering your screening options. If you're 40 to 49 years old, talk to your health care provider about when to start screening.

Are you concerned that you cannot afford to have a mammogram?

Most health insurance plans cover the cost of screening mammograms. If you have a low income or do not have insurance, you may qualify for a free or low-cost mammogram through CDC's National Breast and Cervical Cancer Early Detection Program.

What can I do to lower my chance of getting breast cancer?

One of the most important things you can do to lower your risk of breast cancer is to know your risk of breast cancer. Talk to your doctor about what that means for you.

Your doctor will consider factors that cannot be changed, like:

* Your personal history of breast problems.
* Your family's history of breast cancer.
* Your breast density (the amount of connective and fatty tissue in your breasts).
* Your age. Most breast cancers are found after age 50.
* Your menstrual and childbirth history.
* Your history of radiation treatment therapy to the chest or breasts.
* If you took the drug diethylstilbestrol (DES), which was given to some pregnant women in the United States between 1940 and 1971 to prevent miscarriage, you have a higher risk. Women whose mothers took DES while pregnant with them are also at higher risk.
* If you or close family members have known mutations (changes) in your breast cancer genes (BRCA1 or BRCA2). Women who have inherited these genetic changes are at higher risk of breast and ovarian cancer. You will only know if you have a mutation if you have had genetic testing. Even in the absence of having abnormal genes when tested, it is important to know your family history; we don't know all the genes that cause breast cancer.

Your doctor will also consider factors that can be changed, like any hormone replacement use.

Here are some things you can do to reduce your chance of getting breast cancer:

* Keep a healthy weight.
* Engage in regular physical activity.
* Don't drink alcohol, or limit alcoholic drinks to no more than one per day.

8 Creative Ways to Stay Active with Your Family This Fall

TAKEN FROM INTERMOUNTAIN HEALTHCARE

It's easy to stay active in summer, but as fall takes center stage, it gets more difficult to keep moving. If you're turning on the TV for your kids more often now that colder weather is setting in, it might be time to rethink your fall family activities. Autumn brings beauty and plenty.

Raking Leaves

If you have lots of trees in your yard, turn what might seem like a big chore into family fun time. In addition to being a great source of cardio exercise, raking leaves in your yard will check one more thing off your to-do list. Your kids will also love the fun together time as you rake (and jump into) piles of leaves.

Visit a Corn Maze or a Haunted House

Corn mazes are an easy way to log a several miles with your family. Set aside a few hours and visit a local maze. Your family will love working together to find your way out, and chasing your kids in and out of the maze will get your feet moving and will be a fun way to exercise together. Set out earlier in the day for younger kids, and use your problem-solving skills to find the finish line together. Visiting a haunted house together delivers similar benefits, only with less walking and different kinds of high-rate heartbeats. A lot of haunted attractions, especially the ones that are outside, provide less-intensive frights for younger kids.

Walks and Bike Rides

Enjoy the beauty of fall in your neighborhood by taking regular walks or bike rides with your family. Take a leisurely walk after dinner and see the fun decorations going up around your block.

Pumpkin and Apple Picking

Pumpkin patches and apple orchards are full of fall splendor. While picking pumpkins and apples may not be the first thing you think of for exercise, they're a great way to get more activity into your fall. Whether you're lifting giant pumpkins or climbing apple trees, you'll be getting exercise. Bring the whole family and gather healthy fall foods (or walk around to choose the best candidate for your family jack-o-lantern).

Fall 5K races

Fall is perfect weather for running. Involve your whole family by signing up for a themed 5K. Halloween races often have costume options or even zombie chases. November races give families an opportunity to work off extra calories with a turkey trot on or around Thanksgiving. These themed races usually offer runners fun prizes. Even families with young children can participate. Just load your toddler into a stroller and get ready to race.

Hiking in fall

Embrace the changing of the seasons by taking a hike. Bring your whole family and enjoy the fall foliage together. If you have younger children you can choose a shorter hike and take your time. Challenge your kids to search for different plants or animals along the way. It's a great time to get some exercise and enjoy a nature scavenger hunt.

Football season

Football season doesn't just mean sitting and watching the game. Get involved by joining a local league or team. You'll make new friends and get regular exercise. Not interested in playing on a team? Set up a game with friends, play flag football with your family, or toss a ball in the evenings after dinner.

Get active during TV time

It's inevitable. Fall programming means your favorite shows will be on TV. Instead of becoming a couch potato, use that time to move. Challenge your family to see who can do the most push-ups, sit ups, or jumping jacks during a commercial break. TV time is also a great time to jump on the treadmill for a short walk while you watch your favorite show.

Fall and cooler weather doesn't mean the end to an active family life. Keep yourself and your kids moving and enjoy the beauty fall brings at the same time.

JUST IN TIME FOR SCHOOL, THESE HEALTHY TIPS AND RECIPES WILL KEEP YOUR KIDS FUELED AND READY TO LEARN.

TAKEN FROM EARTHEASY

Back to school doesn't have to mean back to packaged, processed food. Away-from-home meals can be just as nutritious as those around the dinner table if you keep things simple and start right.

Thankfully there are resources out there that can help. Lianne Phillipson is a registered nutritionist and author of Sprout Right Family Food, a manual for parents diving into the wilderness of cooking for babies and children. She offers the following advice to help make back-to-school lunches the best they can be. Recipes from her book are also excerpted below.

1. Get the kids involved

Teaching your children how to pack a great school lunch is the best way to set them on a lifelong path to healthy eating. “Kids need to learn how to be self-sufficient,” Phillipson says. “They need to learn what is healthy and why.”

To help them do this, sit down together and make a list of healthy ingredients. What are protein- and carbohydrate-rich foods? What fruits and vegetables do they like? Look these foods up together and craft a go-to resource that kids can use when packing their own lunches. “This is for any age, even into the teens.”

2. Watch portion size

Getting kids involved in their own lunch-making often means getting portion sizes just right. “Sometimes as parents we fill the containers too much, whereas one small muffin for recess is perfect,” Phillipson says. Let kids fill the bowls and containers and see what they come up with.

3. (Re)consider your child’s age

If your child routinely brings home half her lunch, consider whether or not different foods might get eaten more readily. Phillipson notes that many younger children often get distracted at mealtimes, and before they know it, lunchtime is over. “For little ones who get distracted, finger foods like mini-frittatas and mini-muffins fit in really well.”

Or maybe your child isn’t fond of sandwiches. “Some kids are into soup and warm things like pasta in a thermos,” she says, adding that, “sometimes kids can’t get the thermos open. You have to practice those things at home.”

4. Avoid the packaging

Many of us are trying to reduce packaging when preparing lunches, and that includes schools. Thankfully there are more choices than ever for swapping out the plastic and replacing it with reusable alternatives.

“I love the newer bento boxes that have silicone in the top so you can put dips in there and they don’t end up all over whatever’s next to them.”

Other alternatives include mason jar adapters, reusable silicone sandwich bags, and beeswax wraps.

One teaspoon of sugar equals four grams of sugar on the label. Armed with this knowledge, you can gauge exactly how much sweetener producers are putting in your children’s granola bar.

There’s also another reason to avoid the packaging: processed and packaged foods are often loaded with sugar, especially those marketed to children. “Read whatever package you have and see how close to the beginning sugar ranks. If it’s the number one ingredient, then that’s exactly what’s in the product.”

Sugar will depress the immune system for several hours and send your child on an energy roller coaster. "When you pick them up from school, that's when the meltdown happens, because their blood sugar is now in their baby toe."

One teaspoon of sugar equals four grams of sugar on the label. Armed with this knowledge, you can read labels and picture exactly how much sweetener producers are putting in your child's granola bar. "Look at labels in terms of where the sugar is, but also the quantity," Phillipson says.

5. Consider one treat day per week

If you're comfortable with sweet treats, consider adopting one "treat day" per week. This will limit the sugar but still give kids something to enjoy. But don't forget to voice your expectations ahead of time—so the rest of the lunch gets eaten. "If there's chocolate, most kids are going to eat that first. Probably most adults too," Phillipson says.

Better yet, consider making reduced sugar treats that include fiber and other nutritious ingredients. Phillipson's own recipes (see below) combine family favorites with delicious tastes, both sweet and savory.

6. Remember the H20

Send water to school, since most other beverages lack the nutrition that kids need to get them through the day. Avoid juice boxes wherever possible, Phillipson says. "First of all, they're not good for the environment. Second of all, they're a concentrated source of sweetness."

A reusable bottle filled with water is simple and inexpensive. "If your kids don't love water, do as little juice as possible. So if that's half water, half juice, great. If it's a third juice and the rest water, even better."

Other options include coconut water for budding athletes, herbal iced teas, and homemade lemonade made with a little bit of maple syrup and real lemons.

7. Revisit menus as they grow.

As your children age, don't be surprised if the negotiations for specific foods get more insistent. "As my kids got older, we had to discuss more rather than simply creating boundaries. When they get to that point, it sort of tips and they say, 'if you don't put it in my lunch, I'll find it another way.'"

Being flexible while staying true to what you know is best for your child can be a juggling act, but books like Phillipson's make things easier.

Crock Pot Tortellini Spinach Soup Recipe

Easy Crock Pot Tortellini and Spinach Soup is a hearty soup filled with cheese tortellini, spinach, tomatoes, and lots of spices!!

4.85 from 45 votes

INGREDIENTS

- 20 oz cheese tortellini
- 1 10 oz. bag fresh spinach
- 2 14.5 oz cans Italian style diced tomatoes
- 6 cups chicken broth (I use the less sodium version)
- 8 oz cream cheese
- 1 tsp cumin
- 1 tsp oregano
- 1 tsp garlic salt
- pepper to taste

INSTRUCTIONS

- Place all ingredients in the crock pot, minus the tortellini. Make sure cream cheese is cut up in 1 inch cubes before placing in crock pot.
- Cook on HIGH for 2-3 hours stirring occasionally.
- Add tortellini and continue cooking on HIGH for an additional hour. Serve warm.

NUTRITION

Calories: 406kcalCarbohydrates: 41gProtein: 16gFat: 20gSaturated Fat: 9gCholesterol: 70mgSodium: 1357mgPotassium: 696mgFiber: 5gSugar: 5gVitamin A: 5060IUVitamin C: 38.9mgCalcium: 242mgIron: 5.1mg

Chocolate Chip Cookie Bars

Ingredients for 12 servings

- 1 package yellow cake mix
- 1 cup chocolate chips(175 g)
- ½ cup oil(120 mL)
- 2 eggs

Preparation

- Combine cake mix, chocolate chips, oil, and eggs in a mixing bowl.
- Using an ice cream scoop or your hand, form golf ball-sized balls of cookie dough and transfer to a parchment paper-lined baking sheet.
- Bake at 350°F (180°C) for 10-12 minutes.

Enjoy!

Baked Apples

Ingredients

- 4 large unpeeled tart cooking apples (Rome, Granny Smith, Greening)
- 2 to 4 tablespoons granulated or packed brown sugar
- 4 teaspoons butter or margarine
- 1/2 teaspoon ground cinnamon

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Heat oven to 375°F.
2. Core apples to within 1/2 inch of bottom. Peel 1 -inch strip of skin from around middle of each apple, or peel upper half of each apple to prevent splitting. Place apples in ungreased glass baking dish.
3. Place 1 teaspoon to 1 tablespoon sugar, 1 teaspoon butter and 1/8 teaspoon cinnamon in center of each apple. Sprinkle with additional cinnamon. Pour water into baking dish until 1/4 inch deep.
4. Bake 30 to 40 minutes or until apples are tender when pierced with a fork. (Time will vary depending on size and variety of apple.) Spoon syrup in dish over apples several times during baking if desired.

Healthy Gluten Free Vegan Breakfast Cookies

These breakfast cookies are chewy, nutty, sweet and perfect for a breakfast or snack on the go! They are gluten free, refined sugar free, vegan and dairy free and can be made all in one bowl! They will keep you full for hours and are so simple to make!

PREP TIME10 mins

COOK TIME25 mins

SERVINGS8 large cookies

INGREDIENTS

- 3 Bananas about 3/4 cup mashed
- ½ cup Almond Butter
- ¼ cup Maple Syrup
- 2 cups Rolled Oats
- ½ cup Pumpkin Seeds
- ½ cup Cranberries
- ¼ cup Chia Seeds
- 1 tsp Cinnamon
- Dash of Salt

INSTRUCTIONS

1. In a large bowl add in your wet ingredients. Start by mashing the bananas well with the back of a fork then add in your almond butter and maple syrup and mix well to combine.
2. Add in the rest of your ingredients and mix until evenly coated.
3. Transfer to a baking dish and separate into cookies. I made 8 large cookies but you can split them up so they are smaller.
4. Bake at 350f until golden all over, about 25-30 minutes.

Surviving the Holidays – 10 Steps to Success

By Beverly Thomassian, RN, MPH, CDE, BC-ADM

Even when everything goes according to plan, the holiday season can be stressful. We get out of our usual rhythms of sleep and work. There are travel negotiations, eating out, parties, counters filled with treats, kids on vacation and visitors.

What can we do to make it through the holiday season and be ready to embark on a new year feeling our best? We have ten strategies for you. And even if you can't do all ten, just pick one or a few that you feel you can commit to and succeed with most of the time.

Be a sleep warrior – Americans are chronically under slept. Not getting enough sleep is associated with increased hunger, higher blood sugars, poor concentration, more illness and impaired problem solving. Make sure to give yourself the gift of at least 7 hours of sleep a night. This sleep will help you make the best choices for your health and will protect against illness and fatigue. You got this.

Goal: Get at least 7 hours of sleep a night. You deserve it.

Keep active – Holidays can put our exercise plans to the test, but we have some workaround ideas for you. Invite friends and family to join you for an after meal stroll instead of plopping on the couch. After meal walks lower post meal blood sugars and increase energy by getting muscles activated. And just 10 minutes of walking after meals can make a big difference. Other ideas include; playing catch or Frisbee, put on some music and get people dancing, rake leaves, organize a game of touch football, have family and friends sign up for a local walk event.

Goal: Work toward 30 minutes of activity a day.

Don't forget the Fiber – With all the snacks and tempting foods, whole healthy foods may take a back seat. Enjoy the abundance of seasonal vegetables, fruits, nuts and grains that are fiber rich and that decrease inflammation. Examples include; yams, squash, mandarin oranges, almonds, pistachios, quinoa, kale, brown rice, warm oatmeal, salads and broth based soups.

Goal: Strive to eat at least 25gms of fiber a day.

ENJOY THE ULTIMATE BEVERAGE – H20. Water is the perfect way to keep hydrated, replenished and keeps appetite in check. Add a splash of flavor with a jigger of fruit juice or fresh cucumbers, lime slices or a sprig of rosemary. Be creative. Sparkling waters come in a vast variety of flavors, are calorie free and contain no artificial sweeteners.

Goal: Keep hydrated by enjoying plenty of water.

KEEP AN EYE ON ALCOHOL – While it's true that red wine offers a beneficial anti-inflammatory compound called resveratrol, drinking too much alcohol can lead to unintended outcomes. Studies show that we make poorer food choices if alcohol is on board. This can offer special challenges in party settings, where temptations are abundant. A drink of alcohol contains about 100 calories and mixed drinks have even more. In addition, alcohol can lead to low blood sugars, especially for those taking insulin or sulfonylureas.

Goal: Limit alcohol to one drink a day women, two drinks a day for men.

YOU ARE ALREADY SWEET ENOUGH – Holidays and sugar go hand in hand. If possible, try and eat less than 6 teaspoons of added sugar (does not include natural sugars found in fruit and milk). This goal may not be realistic on all days, but aim for success 80% of the time. Excess sugar intake can cause inflammation and buildup of fat in the liver. One strategy is to limit sugar intake during the day and save your 6 teaspoons for that special dessert or parties. When looking at labels, it is helpful to know that 1 teaspoon equals 4 grams of sugar.

Goal: Limit sugar to 6 teaspoons a day.

YOUR TEETH NEED EXTRA SPECIAL ATTENTION – Taking care of our teeth and gums improves health. Gum inflammation is associated with blood vessel inflammation. Swollen gums can also lead to an increase in blood sugars. During the holidays, find time for regular oral hygiene. Your mouth (and dental team) will thank you.

Goal: Brush teeth at least twice daily and floss at least one daily.

KEEP CONNECTED TO FRIENDS AND FAMILY WHO LOVE YOU JUST THE WAY YOU ARE! – As enjoyable as holidays can be, reuniting with family can also cause stress and stir-up emotions. Feeling out of sorts can lead to stress eating and decrease self-care. If possible, reach out to a trusted friend to share your feelings or keep a holiday journal. Consider bringing a favorite book along during your travels, that you find inspiring and comforting. Give yourself permission to steal away for some quiet time.

Goal: Self-care is important during the holidays.

ENJOY AN OXYGEN COCKTAIL – Studies show that when humans venture into nature and outdoor settings, heart rate and blood pressure improve. Take a moment to appreciate the feeling of the air on your skin, take a deep breath of fresh air, try to find nests in leafless trees, listen to the animal sounds and bird songs and just enjoy that moment.

Goal: Step into nature daily.

TAKE INVENTORY OF THINGS THAT YOU ARE GRATEFUL FOR - Find a moment each day to reflect on a few things that brought you joy or good feelings. Maybe it was your cousin who lent you her favorite sweater. Or an Aunt who gave you the best hug. Special moments with a best friend or an after dinner walk enjoying the fall leaves. These small moments of connection and beauty are one of the most treasured gifts of the holiday season that linger in our hearts and memory long after we say our goodbyes.

Goal: Take note of special moments.

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Ideas for Our Newsletter?

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