

LIFESTYLE TIPS for CANCER PREVENTION

Cancer is a complex disease that is multi-factorial, meaning there is rarely a single cause. But it's now understood that around 40% of cancers diagnosed could be preventable. Here's a summary of current recommendations on modifiable risk factors from key international research organisations.

MINIMISE:

SUGAR SWEETENED DRINKS

High fructose promotes the development of non-alcoholic fatty liver disease and increased risk of cancer.

ALCOHOL

Linked to 6 types of cancer including breast cancer. Increases production of genotoxic and carcinogenic metabolites.

CHEMICALS FOUND IN FOOD & OTHER PRODUCTS

Parabens and phenoxyethanol in beauty products

Phthalates in soft plastics, eg. cling film BPAs in water bottles & plastic containers

Majority are Endocrine Disrupting Chemicals (EDCs) that interfere with hormone production and metabolism in ways that may - over the long term - make us more susceptible to cancer.

TOBACCO

Responsible for 25% of all cancer deaths globally and linked to at least 20 different cancers.

RED & PROCESSED MEAT

Can cause bowel cancer in excess.

Limit intake of red meat to max 3 x per week and avoid processed meat.

FAST FOODS & PROCESSED FOODS HIGH IN FAT OR SUGAR

Unknown chemicals. Low nutrient value. High glycaemic load (found to influence endometrial cancer). Increases glucose & insulin levels.

Excess saturated fatty acids are pro-inflammatory & promote development of insulin resistance a proposed mechanisms for pancreatic cancer.

KEEP YOUR WEIGHT IN THE HEALTHY RANGE

Being overweight or obese is a cause of at least 12 different types of cancers including bowel, liver and prostate.

Extra body fat is 'active', sending out inflammatory chemicals to the rest of the body, these instruct certain cells to divide more often, potentially leading to cancer.

REDUCE STRESS

Chronic stress may weaken the immune system and increase inflammation. Can also lead to poor lifestyle choices. Meditation and mindfulness shown to support cancer patients.

EAT A DIET RICH IN WHOLEGRAINS, VEGETABLES, FRUIT & BEANS

Vitamins & minerals involved in essential functions such as DNA repair and metabolising carcinogens.

Boosts cancer-fighting phytonutrients eg.
Resveratrol - in skin of red grapes
Catechins - green tea
Lycopene - tomatoes
Beta carotene - yellow peppers, carrots, sweet potatoes
Provides fibre, supports beneficial gut bacteria.

Cruciferous veg eg. broccoli and cabbage contain glucosinolates which break down into active anticancer compounds.

AIM TO:

MOVE MORE & SIT LESS

Decreases inflammation and hyperinsulinemia. Improves immune function. Improves composition and diversity of the microbiome.

ENJOY TEA AND/OR COFFEE IN MODERATION

Coffee found to be protective against liver cancer and tea against bladder cancer. Both contain beneficial antioxidant and anti-inflammatory compounds.

TOP TIPS for Creating Long-term Healthy Habits

Every day, millions of people wake up and brush their teeth. Why do we do this? It's because we have formed a habit! Habit formation means to make an action become automatic.

WIRING THE BRAIN FOR HEALTHY HABIT CREATION

Whenever we perform a specific task or action, the brain forms neural pathways that strengthen each time we perform the action. Therefore, repetition is key until the action becomes second nature.



TIPS FOR MAKING HABITS STICK

HABIT STACKING
Add your new behaviour...
5 minutes of stretching each evening...

1



after an old behaviour:
Brushing your teeth

GET SPECIFIC
Swap: "I'm going to go for a walk after work"

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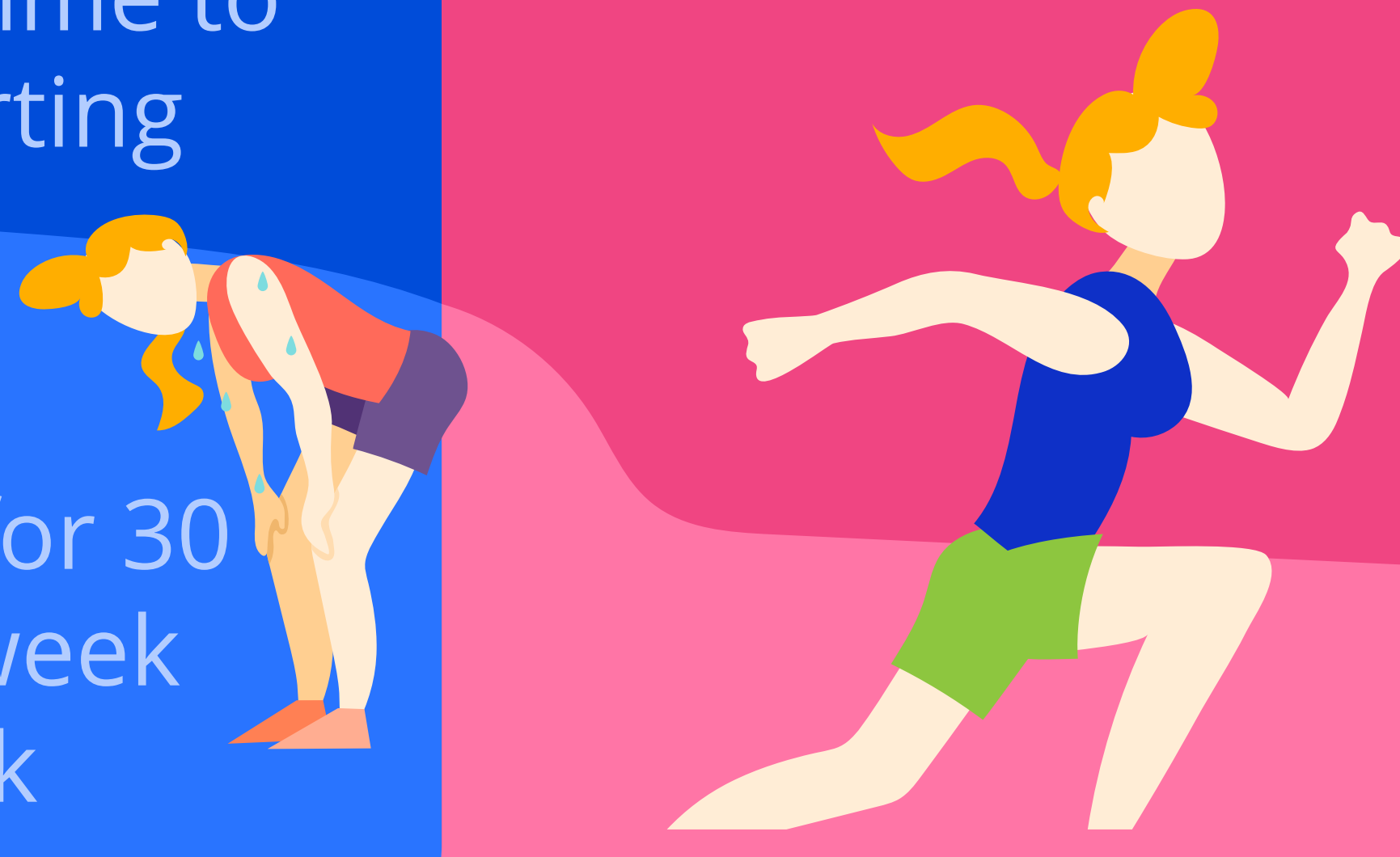


For: "On Tuesdays and Wednesdays when I get home from work, I'm going to change and go for a 20 min walk around the park"



START SMALL
Prevent burnout and allow yourself time to build up by starting small

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Goal: Run for 30 mins 3x a week before work

Starting goal: Interval run for 15 mins 3x a week before work

MAKE IT EASY
Once you've identified the small, specific action, make it easy to do.
E.g., lay out gym clothes so you can slip them on and go

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MAKE IT PHYSICAL
Create a physical action for non-physical habits.
E.g., To practice gratitude get a gratitude journal and keep it where you plan to perform the task

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TRAIN YOUR BRAIN
When the brain recognises a pattern, such as a connection between an action and a feeling, it files it in the basal ganglia, a part of the brain where we develop emotions and memories and pattern recognition.
Brain-training exercises like Sudoku can strengthen the function of the basal ganglia. Set yourself a goal to do it three times a week.

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HEALTHY HABIT INSPIRATION
Drink a glass of water after your morning alarm




Practice deep breathing for 3 mins after brushing your teeth at night



Stretch for 10 mins before showering each morning



Walk or run for 30 mins upon waking - place clothes by your bed the night before



Eat a protein-rich breakfast each morning

