MEN’S HEALTH GUIDE
Dear reader,

Cancer. It’s a word we often avoid saying, let alone thinking about. And as men, we are less likely to do things for the good of our health than women (according to the statistics anyway). But by taking action now, you can make cancer less likely in your future.

As a doctor, it’s disheartening that so many people don’t know that their lifestyle has an impact on their risk of getting cancer – instead, cancer is seen as either down to luck or something that ‘won’t happen to me’.

But it is worth thinking about. We are not powerless against cancer. If we all lived healthy lifestyles, which includes eating a healthy diet, being physically active and maintaining a healthy weight, around 40 per cent of cancer cases could be prevented.

If you want to take control of your health, this booklet is a great place to start. Written with people like you and me in mind, it looks at the cancers we men are most at risk of and gives tips on how we can protect ourselves against them that can fit in with our daily lives and how we like to spend our time.

Use this booklet to start taking steps to improve your odds of a healthier, cancer-free future.

Kindest regards

Professor Martin Wiseman
Medical Doctor and Medical and Scientific Adviser,
World Cancer Research Fund
Men’s health – the facts

67% of men aged 16 or over are classified as overweight or obese (England, 2017)

Over 6,000 more cases of cancer are diagnosed each year in men compared to women (UK, 2016)

More than 1 in 4 men drink in excess of the government’s alcohol guideline – that’s the equivalent of drinking more than 7 pints of beer per week (England 2017)
Only about 5–10% of all cancers result from specific inherited genes.

About 40% of the most common cancers could be prevented if everyone lived a healthy lifestyle, including eating a healthy diet, maintaining a healthy weight, and being physically active.

Prostate, lung, and bowel cancer are the most common cancers among men, making up more than half of all cancers developed in UK men.

Only 25% of men eat the recommended 5 a day (England, 2017).
Common cancers in men

1 Prostate cancer
About 47,100 new cases in UK men a year
Possible symptoms: weak or reduced urine flow, need to urinate frequently, difficulty or pain passing urine, blood in urine or semen.
Lifestyle risk factors: there is strong evidence that being overweight is a cause of advanced prostate cancer, which accounts for about 20 per cent of cases. It’s the more aggressive type and can be fatal.
Early detection: men aged 50 and over may be advised to have a PSA test by their GP, usually if they have some of the symptoms above. It is an initial test for helping diagnosis but as raised levels of PSA can also be caused by other conditions, it can’t on its own confirm if someone has the disease. For more information, visit: cancerscreening.nhs.uk/prostate

2 Lung cancer
About 24,500 new cases in UK men a year
Possible symptoms: a cough that lasts for more than two or three weeks, coughing up blood, unexplained weight loss, shortness of breath, chest pain, fatigue, stubborn chest infections.
Lifestyle risk factors: smoking causes over 90 per cent of lung cancers in men, so the most important thing you can do to protect yourself is not smoke or give up smoking. Taking high-dose beta-carotene supplements can also increase the risk of lung cancer in current and ex-smokers.
Early detection: if you’re concerned, get checked out by your GP as soon as possible.

3 Bowel cancer
About 23,500 new cases in UK men a year
Possible symptoms: bleeding from the back passage, abdominal pain, change in bowel habits, a lump in the abdomen.
Lifestyle risk factors: a diet high in red meat, drinking alcohol (especially harmful if combined with smoking), eating processed meats, being overweight, smoking, being inactive, a diet low in fibre (found in foods such as wholegrains, vegetables and fruit).
Early detection: the NHS Bowel Cancer Screening Programme provides screening for all men (and women) aged 60 and over, and from 50 in Scotland. For more information, visit: cancerscreening.nhs.uk/bowel
Having any of the symptoms described doesn’t mean that you have cancer, but it’s best to visit your GP and get checked out. It’s also a good idea to find out if any types of cancer run in your family, and to speak to your GP if you are concerned.
Cancer prevention checklist

Many people think that cancer is the result of our genetics or bad luck, but science has shown that we aren’t powerless against cancer. Many cases of common cancers could be prevented if we all:

- Stayed active
- Ate more wholegrains, vegetables, fruit and pulses (beans, peas and lentils)
- Ate less red meat and avoided processed meat, like bacon and ham
- Drank little, if any, alcohol
- Kept a healthy weight, which can be helped by:
  - Eating less high-calorie processed foods, like crisps, chocolate and fried foods
  - Drinking fewer sugary drinks, like cola
- Didn’t smoke or gave up smoking
- Were careful in the sun

Take action for your health

No doubt you will already be doing some of the points in the checklist. For others, making small adjustments to your lifestyle could make a big difference to your health.

Take the quiz on the next page to see how healthy your lifestyle is right now. Then keep reading to work out what changes you could make to help you towards a healthier, cancer-free future.

Or why not try our Cancer Health Check? Visit: wcrf-uk.org/cancerhealthcheck
How healthy are you?

1. In total, how much physical activity do you do a week? Any activity that raises your heart rate and makes you breathe deeper counts, such as brisk walking.
   a) 150 minutes or more a week
   b) 90–149 minutes a week
   c) Less than 90 minutes a week

2. How many portions of fruit and vegetables (80g, or a large handful) do you eat a day?
   a) 5 or more
   b) 3–4
   c) 2 or fewer

3. How often do you eat red meat? This includes beef, pork and lamb.
   a) I don't eat red meat; or up to 3 times a week
   b) 4–5 times a week
   c) Every day

4. When you have bread, pasta or rice, you tend to eat:
   a) Mostly brown or wholegrain
   b) Equal amounts of brown and white
   c) Mostly white

5. How much alcohol do you drink? One unit equals half a pint of beer or a single measure of spirits. A small glass (125ml) of wine contains 1.5 units.
   a) I don’t drink alcohol; or only 1 or 2 units on special occasions
   b) Up to 14 units a week
   c) More than 14 units a week

6. When you're thirsty, what do you tend to drink?
   a) Water, sugar-free or diet soft drinks, or unsweetened tea or coffee
   b) Vary between a) and c)
   c) Sugary soft drinks like cola or energy drinks; fruit juice; or tea or coffee with sugar

7. Do you smoke?
   a) No; or I used to but have given up
   b) Yes, but I am trying to give up
   c) Yes

8. Do you know your weight and Body Mass Index (BMI)?
   a) Yes, I am a healthy weight
   b) Yes, I need to lose weight; or yes, I am underweight
   c) No

How did you score?

Mostly As
Well done, you seem to be living a healthy lifestyle already. Keep reading for extra tips and suggestions to help you maintain your health.

Mostly Bs
You’re on the right track, but there's room for improvement. Keep reading to see what else you can do to be healthier and help protect yourself against cancer.

Mostly Cs
Your health could benefit if you made changes to your lifestyle. Even small changes could make a big difference and mean you’re less likely to develop cancer. Keep reading to see how easy it can be.
Stay active

Life can often get in the way of staying active. But making time for physical activity is important for your health. Doing at least 150 minutes of moderate intensity or 75 minutes of vigorous intensity physical activity a week can help to protect you against cancer as well as help you maintain a healthy weight and feel great. Whatever your age or level of fitness, it is never too late to start.

The facts on activity

- Activity helps move food through your digestive system more quickly, reducing the amount of time that any cancer-causing substances are in contact with the lining of the bowel.
- Being active can lower insulin resistance (a condition where the hormone insulin becomes less effective at lowering blood sugar levels) which has been shown to have a role in cancer development.

Challenge yourself to get active

Aim to do at least 150 minutes of moderate intensity activity or 75 minutes of vigorous activity every week. If that sounds like a lot, remember, it all adds up – even short chunks of 10-15 minutes count towards your weekly target.

To increase the benefits even more and to help you maintain a healthy weight, aim to do 45-60 minutes of moderate intensity activity every day.

Moderate intensity activities, like brisk walking, cycling, gardening and swimming, will make you feel warmer and breathe faster, but you should still be able to talk.

Vigorous activities will raise your heart rate and make you start to sweat and feel out of breath. This includes running, sports like squash and football, and fast cycling.

Over $\frac{1}{3}$ of men don't meet the recommended 150 minutes a week of physical activity.

(England, 2017)
Practical tips for getting active

**Active transport**
Rather than using public transport or driving to work, try cycling, jogging or even power walking for part or all of your journey.

**Lunch break**
If you work in an office, use your lunch break to get active. Maybe you have a gym nearby where you can go for a swim or attend a class? Or simply stick on your trainers and go for a walk or run. Bringing in your lunch gives you more time to be active.

**Be proactive**
Make small adjustments to your normal routine like taking the stairs, walking up the escalator, or getting up to talk to a colleague.

**Keep it fun**
An activity you enjoy is much easier to stick to. Inviting a friend, family member or colleague to join you for a cycle or a jog can make it more fun for you and help them to get healthier too.

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1 in 4 men do less than 30 minutes of activity a week. (England, 2018)

If you’re new to exercise or haven’t exercised for a while, it is a good idea to see your GP for a check-up before getting started.

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**Other pros of being active:**
- Reduces risk of heart disease, stroke and Type 2 diabetes
- Eases symptoms of arthritis
- Helps to protect against and manage depression and anxiety
- Reduces risk of dementia
- Improves balance
- Helps lower blood pressure
- Improves blood cholesterol levels
Mix up your movement

Being active doesn’t just mean going for a run. There are three basic types of physical activity: cardiovascular (‘cardio’) activity, strength training and stretching. Each one helps your body in a different way so for the best result, aim to include all three in your routine.

Cardiovascular activities

Activities that raise your heart rate and make you breathe deeper.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Frequency: Fit in some cardiovascular activity every day.</th>
<th>Time: 30–60 minutes. This can be all in one go or spread throughout the day.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Intensity: Aim for moderate (where you are still able to talk) to vigorous (where talking becomes difficult and you might be out of breath).</td>
<td>Type: Includes brisk walking, jogging, playing football or squash, cycling and swimming.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Strength training

Activities that work your muscles against weight or resistance to increase strength.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Frequency: Two or more days a week.</th>
<th>Type: Includes using free weights, weight machines or exercises that use your own body weight, such as doing press-ups. Remember to work all the major muscle groups across the week (abdomen, arms, back, chest, glutes (bottom muscles), legs and shoulders).</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Intensity: Aim to complete three sets of 8–12 repetitions per exercise.</td>
<td>Time: 20–30 minutes, exercising a range of muscle groups within this time.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It’s important to **warm up** before doing any exercise. Gentle exercises, like jogging, warm up the muscles and joints so there’s a lower risk of injury, particularly from strength exercises and stretching.
Feel the burn

Here is a rough guide to how many calories you would burn during 30 minutes of physical activity*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Calories</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cycling</td>
<td>320</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Playing Squash</td>
<td>310</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jogging</td>
<td>300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Swimming</td>
<td>250</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weight Training</td>
<td>210</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gardening</td>
<td>160</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Based on the average UK man, weighing 84.9kg (13st 5lb)

To check out how many calories your favourite exercise burns, visit: wcrf-uk.org/exercise-calculator

Stretching

Stretching is important for improved flexibility and balance. Aim to include exercises that work your joints through their full range of motion as part of your exercise routine. These exercises tend to be gentle so they don’t count towards your recommended 150 minutes of weekly activity.

Sit less

As well as moving more, it’s important to limit sedentary time – this means not sitting or lying down more than necessary, when not sleeping. There is strong evidence that excess screen time (time spent doing sedentary activities like watching television or using a computer) is a cause of weight gain, overweight and obesity. If you spend a lot of time sitting down, try to take regular standing breaks.
Eat well

Looking at what you put on your plate at mealtimes is a simple way to start checking if what you eat could be healthier. For a healthy, balanced meal, at least three-quarters of your plate should be made up of vegetables, beans and grains. So rather than being an afterthought, make greens the focus of your meals.

What should make up most of your plate?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Vegetables (excluding potatoes) and fruit – fresh, frozen, dried and canned in water or natural juices all count towards your 5 A DAY</th>
<th>3/4 (or more) wholegrains, vegetables, fruit and pulses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pulses – eg. lentils, peas and beans, count towards one of your 5 A DAY</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grains and cereals – eg. rice, oats, pasta, bread and unsweetened breakfast cereals. Opt for wholegrain varieties and limit highly processed starchy foods, eg. cakes and pastries</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Starchy vegetables – eg. potatoes. Try not to add fat, like butter or cream, and opt for boiled or steamed rather than roasted or fried in oil</td>
<td>1/4 (or less) meat, fish and other protein foods (see page 17 for examples)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The link between wholegrains, fruit, veg and cancer

- Diets rich in fibre (eg. wholegrains, vegetables and fruit) can protect against bowel cancer. This may be because fibre helps to move food more quickly through the bowel.
- There’s evidence that vegetables and fruit can protect against cancers of the mouth and throat and digestive tract.
- There is also strong evidence that eating a fibre-rich diet, high in wholegrains, can protect against weight gain, overweight and obesity, which is linked with a reduced risk of nine cancers in men, making it one of the most important ways to help protect against cancer.
Vegetables and fruit provide vitamins, minerals and other substances known as phytochemicals, which might help protect cells in the body from damage that may lead to cancer. Different types of vegetables and fruit contain different phytochemicals, so it is best to eat a variety every day.

Why 5 A DAY?

We recommend having at least five portions of vegetables, fruit and pulses a day. As well as containing nutrients which are vital for health, most of these foods are low in calories and high in fibre making them great for keeping your weight in check without feeling hungry.

5 A DAY – what counts?

A portion weighs 80g (30g dried or 150ml juiced).

- **Vegetables** like carrots, spinach, broccoli, butternut squash
- **Fruit** like apples, oranges, berries
- **Pulses** like beans, peas and lentils – only count as one portion a day
- **Unsweetened fruit** or **vegetable juice** – only counts as one portion a day

Try to eat a wide variety as different vegetables and fruit contain different nutrients. And aim to eat more vegetables than fruit as they tend to be lower in sugar.

Practical tips for fitting in your 5 A DAY

Eating five portions of vegetables and fruit a day may seem like a challenge. Here are some tips to help you succeed:

- **Breakfast boost.** Add chopped banana or berries to your cereal or porridge; or try grilled mushrooms and tomatoes, and spinach as part of a healthier cooked breakfast.
- **Stir in spinach.** Add a large handful of spinach to a hot bowl of soup or stew. The heat is enough to cook it so it doesn’t add to cooking time or washing up.
- **Bulk up your meal with veg.** If you’re cooking soups, sauces, chilli, curries or stews from scratch, try blending in some vegetables. Carrots, onions, mushrooms, swede, squash and courgettes work well in Bolognese. You could also add beans or lentils.
- **Sunday roast.** Instead of potatoes, try roasting sweet potatoes, squash or parsnips in a little oil. Unlike potatoes, they count towards your 5 A DAY.
Cut down on red and processed meat

Meat, especially red meat, is often seen as the star of a meal but there are lots of good reasons for shifting the focus to vegetables, beans and grains. As well as the health benefits these foods provide (see pages 14–15), there is strong evidence that eating processed meats or too much red meat can cause bowel cancer.

Eating a lot of meat is also characteristic of a ‘Western type’ diet which our evidence shows is a cause of weight gain.

Try to eat no more than about three portions of red meat a week, which is about 350–500g cooked weight in total (or 525–750g raw weight) a week and avoid processed meat to help protect yourself against bowel cancer.

What is processed meat?

Processed meat has been smoked, cured or had salt or chemical preservatives added rather than simply cooked or reformed (like most sausages and burgers). This includes bacon, salami, pastrami, corned beef, pepperoni, chorizo and hot dogs and all types of ham.

We recommend avoiding processed meat because we have strong evidence that it is a cause of bowel cancer, and there is no nutritional need to eat it. It also tends to be high in fat and salt.

The link between red and processed meat and cancer

▶ Haem, the compound that gives red meat its colour, can stimulate the formation of cancer-causing compounds in the body.

▶ When red meat is cooked at high temperatures, compounds are formed that are thought to cause cancer.

▶ As well as predominately being made from red meat, processed meat often contains added nitrites and nitrates which, when cooked with protein, can form compounds thought to cause cancer.

Why is some red meat OK?

Red meat (beef, pork, lamb and goat) can be a valuable source of nutrients including protein, iron and zinc. However, eating a varied diet that contains less red meat can still provide all the nutrients you need.
**Red meat – how much a week?**

Here’s an example of how you could have three meals a week containing red meat and still stick to less than 350g in total (cooked weight):

- **Spaghetti Bolognese with minced beef = 140g** (about 210g raw weight)
- **Pork or lamb chop = 75g** (about 110g raw weight)
- **Roast beef, pork or lamb = 90g** (about 130g raw weight)

**What can you eat instead?**

- **Poultry** – eg. skinless chicken and turkey
- **Non-oily fish** – eg. cod and canned tuna (in spring water)
- **Oily fish** – eg. salmon, trout, sardines and mackerel
- **Eggs, dairy and dairy alternatives** – eg. milk, yoghurt, cheese. Opt for reduced-fat, unsweetened varieties
- **Nuts** – eg. Brazil nuts and almonds
- **Meat-substitutes** – eg. beans, tofu and Quorn

**Practical tips to cut down**

- **Smaller portions** (about the size of a deck of cards) mean you can have red meat more often and stick to less than 350g.
- Reserve red meat for one meal a day, and **keep some days red meat-free**.
- **Make red meat go further** by adding some beans, chickpeas or mushrooms to bulk up stews, chillies and pasta sauces. They have a meaty texture and are just as filling.
- **Use smoked paprika instead of chorizo** for the flavour kick in your cooking.
- **Substitute beef mince for turkey or even Quorn mince** – even if you do half and half, you’ll cut calories and they’re just as filling. Boost the flavour with onion, garlic, herbs and spices.
- **Enjoy a full English breakfast, but as a treat**. Try to cut back on the bacon and add more grilled mushrooms and tomatoes.
- **Rather than ham in your sandwiches, try hard-boiled eggs, canned tuna** (in spring water) or **low-fat soft cheese**. Add rocket or spring onion to lift the flavour.
As well as eating more vegetables, beans and grains, and cutting down on red meat, there are lots of small changes you can make to how you eat that can make a big difference to your health. Try our practical tips and see how easy it can be.

**Cut down on junk food**
Processed foods may be tempting but eating too much of these high-calorie foods has been shown to be a cause of being overweight or obese. They also tend to be high in fat, starches or sugar, and low in fibre. Try to cut down on foods like these:

- Pies and pastries
- Chocolate, cakes and biscuits
- Crisps
- Fast foods like chips, fried chicken, pizza and curries

**Plan in advance**
Deciding what you’re going to eat for the week ahead is a great way to avoid relying too much on takeaways and ready meals. It can also help you save money.

**Keep an eye on your portion sizes**
Rather than automatically going back for seconds, allow a few minutes before deciding if you are still hungry. Leftovers don’t need to go to waste – most foods can be chilled and kept for lunch the next day.
Trim the fat

Fat is high in calories. To cut down, try to:

▶ Choose reduced-fat versions of cheese, milk and yoghurt
▶ Swap butter for reduced-fat spread or low-fat soft cheese
▶ Avoid pastry, like pies
▶ Measure out oil with a teaspoon, or use an oil spray
▶ Opt for reduced-fat mayonnaise and salad dressings
▶ Choose lean cuts of meat and trim any visible fat

Use healthy cooking techniques

Baking, steaming, boiling and stir-frying require little or no oil or butter and can be used to cook a variety of foods.

A pinch less salt

The average man in England consumes 9.1g salt a day – that’s well above the recommended maximum of 6g a day.

Although the evidence linking added salt to stomach cancer has become less clear – partly because of the difficulty in measuring salt consumption – we cannot rule out the link, and eating too much salt is linked to other health conditions. Therefore we recommend consuming no more than 6g of salt a day – that’s about one teaspoon.

As well as not adding salt when you are cooking or at the table, it is a good idea to check food labels as foods like biscuits, soups and breakfast cereals may contain more salt than you expect.
Think about what you drink

Whether it’s a glass of wine with a meal or a pint of beer at the end of a busy day, for many of us, drinking alcohol can become a normal part of day-to-day life. And, while the immediate effects of drinking alcohol are obvious, we often don’t think about the longer-term impact on our health.

There is strong scientific evidence that drinking any type of alcoholic drink can increase your risk of mouth and throat, oesophageal, bowel, stomach, breast and liver cancer. Alcohol is particularly harmful when combined with smoking for some cancer types.

To reduce your cancer risk as much as possible, we recommend not drinking alcohol at all. If you do choose to drink alcohol, follow national guidelines. In the UK, the recommendation is to drink no more than 14 units a week, spread over at least three days.

Beer belly?
Alcoholic drinks are surprisingly high in calories and offer few of the healthy nutrients your body needs.

A pint of beer (4% alcohol) contains about 170 calories – similar to a bag of crisps.

A large (250ml) glass of wine (8–13% alcohol) contains about 190 calories – similar to three bourbon biscuits or seven chocolate-coated biscuit fingers.

What is a unit?
One unit contains 10ml or 8g of pure alcohol.

One pint of normal strength beer, lager or cider is 2 units

One 25ml measure of spirits such as gin or whisky is 1 unit

One small (125ml) glass of wine is 1.5 units

To find out how many calories are in alcoholic drinks, visit: wcrf-uk.org/alcohol-calculator
How can I drink less alcohol?

- Savour your drink – avoid downing your drinks too quickly.
- Order small measures – double measures may seem good value but can result in you drinking more.
- Finish your drink before topping up your glass – this will help you to keep track of how much you drink.
- Alternate alcoholic drinks with water or non-alcoholic drinks.
- Avoid eating salty snacks – they can make you thirsty and encourage you to drink more.
- Keep a few days every week alcohol-free.
- Dilute your drinks – for example add low-calorie tonic water to a single measure of spirits or sugar-free lemonade to beer or lager to make a shandy.
- Don’t hold on to your glass – put your glass down when you’re sitting or standing in one place.

If you need help to cut down on the amount of alcohol you drink, your GP can provide advice and support.

Swap soft drinks

It is easy to forget that soft drinks contain calories too. Sugary soft drinks – such as cola, lemonade, energy drinks, cordials and squashes – can contribute to weight gain if drunk regularly. They are easy to drink in large quantities without making you feel full.

Unsweetened fruit juice is a good source of vitamins but also contains a lot of naturally-occurring sugar so it is best not to drink more than one small glass (150ml) a day.

Swapping sugary drinks for water or lower calorie alternatives like low-calorie soft drinks, or unsweetened tea and coffee with a small amount of milk can help you to keep a healthy weight.

Did you know? A 500ml bottle of cola contains over 13 teaspoons of sugar. Imagine putting that in your cup of tea.
Keep a healthy weight

Did you know that being a healthy weight is the most important way you can reduce your risk of cancer, after choosing not to smoke? With two in three men in the UK currently overweight or obese, as a nation we are doing a lot of potential harm to our health.

We have strong evidence that being overweight is a cause of many common cancers in men, including:

- Bowel
- Gallbladder
- Kidney
- Liver
- Mouth, pharynx and larynx
- Oesophagus
- Pancreas
- Prostate (advanced)
- Stomach

Being a healthy weight can also help to protect you from heart disease, Type 2 diabetes and other diseases.

How to keep your weight healthy

Given the importance of being a healthy weight for cancer prevention, it’s probably not surprising that a lot of the advice in this booklet can help to protect you against cancer by helping you to maintain a healthy weight.

Here’s a recap of the things that can decrease risk of weight gain or being overweight or obese, and so may help us maintain a steady weight:

- Doing aerobic physical activity, including brisk walking – aim to do 45–60 minutes every day
- Eating foods that contain dietary fibre (see pages 14–15)
- Eating a ‘Mediterranean type’ dietary pattern, which is rich in vegetables, fruit, pulses, nuts, wholegrains, fish and unsaturated fats such as olive oil. It’s usually low in meat and dairy foods.

The following increase risk of weight gain or being overweight or obese:

- Too much screen time – try to sit less (see page 13)
- Drinking sugar-sweetened drinks, such as cola (see page 21)
- Eating ‘fast foods’, like fried chicken, chips and high-calorie drinks (like cola and milkshakes)
- Eating a ‘Western type’ diet, which includes high amounts of sugars, meat and fat

The more of this advice you can follow, the more you can protect yourself against gaining weight.
Fueling your needs

The average adult man needs around 2,500 calories a day. But your weight is a balancing act between the energy you put in (calories from food and drinks) and the energy you use (for normal daily functions and to fuel physical activity). If you eat or drink more than your body needs, you will put on weight. The reverse is also true: if you regularly use more energy than you take in, you will start to lose weight.

The facts on fat

- Storing too much body fat can cause insulin resistance (where insulin becomes less effective at controlling blood sugar levels), which encourages the body to produce growth hormones. High levels of these hormones can promote the growth of cancer cells.

- Body fat also stimulates an inflammatory response. Inflammation can promote the growth of cancer by encouraging cancer cells to divide. This inflammatory response may underpin the wide variety of different cancers that have been linked to obesity.

Did you know? Consuming 100 calories a day more than you need can lead to weight gain of 5kg (11lbs) a year.

Check out how many calories your favourite exercise burns: wcrf-uk.org/exercise-calculator
How do you measure up?

Your BMI

Body Mass Index (BMI) is a simple way to check if you are a healthy weight for your height. To work out your BMI, all you need to know is your weight (in kilograms) and your height (in metres).

1. **Measure your height, in metres** (1 ft = 0.3 m).
2. **Weigh yourself, in kilograms** (1 stone = 6.35 kg).
3. **Calculate your BMI using the formula in the box on the right.**

BMI may not be an accurate indicator for some men, including bodybuilders, athletes, the elderly or those less than 1.5 m/5 ft tall.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>BMI</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Less than 18.5</td>
<td>Underweight</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18.5 – 24.9</td>
<td>Healthy weight</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25 – 29.9</td>
<td>Overweight</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30 or more</td>
<td>Obese</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Example calculation:**

- **Weight:** 70 kg
- **Height²:** \((1.7 \text{ m} \times 1.7 \text{ m})\)
- **BMI of 24.2**

Or put your details into our online calculator: [wcrf-uk.org/bmi-calculator](http://wcrf-uk.org/bmi-calculator)
Your waist measurement

Your waist measurement is a good indicator of overall body fatness, which is linked to a greater risk of cancer, heart disease and Type 2 diabetes. As this is where men tend to carry excess weight, they are particularly at risk. To measure your waist:

1. **Place the tape measure around your waist, half way between the bottom of your lowest rib and the top of your hip bone.** If you have trouble finding this point, then lean to one side and see where the skin folds. This is the point where you can measure your waist.

2. **Make sure the tape is straight and snug but isn’t digging into your skin.**

3. **Breathe out normally and measure.**

As a guide, a healthy waist measurement for **men** is: Less than **94cm (37 inches)**

**Target a healthy weight**

If your BMI or waist measurement is over the healthy range, your health could benefit from losing some weight. Even if you’re at the top of the healthy range, trimming down could be good for you.

Aim to gradually lose weight by making healthy changes to your diet and adding in more activity: dropping 0.5–1kg (1–2lbs) a week is a realistic goal and one that you can achieve in a healthy way. Once you have achieved your weight loss goal, it’s important to continue eating healthily and being active to help you maintain a healthy weight.
Ready for change?

Now you’ve read how easy it can be to benefit your health and protect yourself against cancer by making small changes to your diet and lifestyle, we hope you feel inspired.

Why not visit our website for more tips and recipes to help you make your healthy changes stick?

Find out more

Why not try our Cancer Health Check?
Visit wcrf-uk.org/cancerhealthcheck

And for more information and advice on healthy living for cancer prevention, visit wcrf-uk.org or call us on 020 7343 4205

- For information on the detection and treatment of cancer contact Macmillan Cancer Support. Visit their website www.macmillan.org.uk or call 0808 808 0000.

- For general healthy living information, visit www.nhs.uk/livewell

- To find information on NHS Cancer Screening Programmes, visit www.cancerscreening.nhs.uk

- For any concerns about alcohol and drinking or to get support, visit www.nhs.uk/live-well/alcohol-support or call Drinkline (a free national helpline) on 0300 123 1110

World Cancer Research Fund’s healthy eating and lifestyle information is aimed at the general adult population and is not intended to influence individuals who are following special diets (on medical advice) or who have special dietary or exercise needs. The information contained in our health information publications relate to the prevention of cancer. We are unable to give medical advice. For advice on specific cases, please consult your GP or a trained health professional.
Cancer Prevention Recommendations

Be a healthy weight
Keep your weight within the healthy range and avoid weight gain in adult life

Be physically active
Be physically active as part of everyday life – walk more and sit less

Eat a diet rich in wholegrains, vegetables, fruit and beans
Make wholegrains, vegetables, fruit, and pulses (legumes) such as beans and lentils a major part of your usual daily diet

Limit consumption of ‘fast foods’ and other processed foods high in fat, starches or sugars
Limiting these foods helps control calorie intake and maintain a healthy weight

Limit consumption of red and processed meat
Eat no more than moderate amounts of red meat, such as beef, pork and lamb. Eat little, if any, processed meat

Limit consumption of sugar-sweetened drinks
Drink mostly water and unsweetened drinks

Limit alcohol consumption
For cancer prevention, it’s best not to drink alcohol

Do not use supplements for cancer prevention
Aim to meet nutritional needs through diet alone

For mothers: breastfeed your baby, if you can
Breastfeeding is good for both mother and baby

After a cancer diagnosis: follow our Recommendations, if you can
Check with your health professional what is right for you

Not smoking and avoiding other exposure to tobacco and excess sun are also important in reducing cancer risk.

Following these Recommendations is likely to reduce intakes of salt, saturated and trans fats, which together will help prevent other non-communicable diseases.
About World Cancer Research Fund

World Cancer Research Fund is the leading UK charity dedicated to the prevention of cancer. Our mission is to champion the latest and most authoritative scientific research from around the world on cancer prevention and survival through diet, weight and physical activity so that we can help people make informed lifestyle choices to protect themselves against cancer.

Currently, one in two people born in the UK after 1960 will develop cancer at some point in their lives, but around 40 per cent of cancer cases could be prevented. By following our Cancer Prevention Recommendations, choosing not to smoke (or giving up smoking) and being safe in the sun, you will have the best chance of living a life free from the disease.

The cornerstone of our research programme is our Continuous Update Project (CUP). It’s the world’s largest source of scientific research on cancer prevention and survival through diet, weight and physical activity. A panel of world-renowned independent experts review the scientific research to develop Cancer Prevention Recommendations based on the best evidence. Find out more: wcrf-uk.org/our-research

For the references used in this booklet or to request the information in large print, please contact us. If you have any comments or suggestions about any aspect of this booklet or our other health information, we would welcome your feedback.