HEALTHY LIVING AFTER CANCER
Dear cancer survivor,

From my experience, a diagnosis of cancer can throw your life into turmoil. Once the initial procedures and treatments are over you embark on the road to recovery. This can be a mental as well as a physical battle and, for me, the advice given by World Cancer Research Fund about healthy lifestyle and cancer prevention was invaluable. They enabled me to take control of my life again and do positive things in terms of exercise and diet to give myself the best chance of regaining my health and preventing another cancer diagnosis in the future.

Eighteen years after breast cancer I am still following World Cancer Research Fund’s advice and thoroughly recommend it to you.

With all good wishes for a healthy future,

Ruth Penny
Fellow cancer survivor

To read more about Ruth’s story, and stories from other World Cancer Research Fund supporters, please visit our website: www.wcrf-uk.org/your-story
## Contents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Page</th>
<th>Section</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Moving on from cancer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Making healthy choices</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Food, drink and activity diary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Setting healthy goals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Move more</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>Eat well</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26</td>
<td>Supplements – do you need them?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27</td>
<td>Cancer Prevention Recommendations</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Move more

- 10 great reasons to be active after your cancer treatment
- Working out a personal activity plan

### Eat well

- Low-calorie meal ideas
- Top tips to lower your calories
- Reshape your plate
- 5 A DAY your way
- Make less room for red meat and avoid processed meat
- Hidden salt
- Think about what you drink
- Swap soft drinks

### Be a healthy weight

- Measuring your BMI
- Measuring your waist
Moving on from cancer

Being told you have cancer can be life-changing and, regardless of your experience, you’re bound to feel a sense of relief when your treatment ends. Over time, most people regain a sense of normality. But recovery, managing your health and dealing with the anxiety that cancer might return may take some time.

One way to take a positive step forward is to take control of your health. Making healthy choices about the food you eat and how active you are can help you to feel good, have more energy and improve your overall health and wellbeing.

There is growing evidence that if you eat a healthy diet, are a healthy weight and are physically active, you can reduce your risk of getting cancer again.

Further scientific studies are needed before we can fully understand the role of diet and lifestyle on cancer risk in cancer survivors. Based on the available evidence, we recommend that, after treatment, cancer survivors follow our Cancer Prevention Recommendations (see page 27) unless they are unable to or have been advised otherwise by a doctor, dietitian or specialist nurse.

Better survival rates

Thanks to improved treatments, half of all cancer patients diagnosed in England and Wales in 2010–11 are predicted to survive 10 years or longer.

This booklet provides guidance for people who have finished and recovered from treatment for cancer. If you are unsure whether this advice is suitable for you, it is best to check with your doctor.
Making healthy choices

The best way to reduce your risk of cancer and improve your general health is to remember these key messages:

Be well informed

After treatment for cancer, people often choose to make changes to their lifestyle. For some this can be quite dramatic, while others may take a more gentle approach, making small changes to their routines.

If you decide there are changes you could make to improve your health, whether large or small, it is important to make changes based on sound scientific evidence. This can be very difficult as countless remedies, books and websites promise to reveal the secrets to beating and preventing cancer, often by following extreme diets or taking lots of supplements.

The information in this booklet is based on the most up-to-date scientific evidence. We found that diet and lifestyle approaches don’t have to be extreme to help prevent cancer – there’s no need to cut out key food groups, consume special foods, or pop supplements to lower your cancer risk – your health could benefit by simply reshaping some of your habits and everyday routine.

Get started

The first step is to look at what you are already doing. Fill in the Food, drink and activity diary on the back of this page and use this booklet to help you work out where you could make positive changes.

For example, if you usually skip breakfast, you could try to reintroduce it. Breakfast is a great opportunity to eat healthily – there are lots of wholegrain breakfast foods that you can top with a portion of fruit, vegetables or pulses.

Read more about our research: www.wcrf-uk.org/our-research
Food, drink and activity diary

Use this diary to jot down everything you’ve had to eat and drink and all of the physical activity you have done today. To record more days, you can photocopy this page or download copies at: [www.wcrf-uk.org/publications](http://www.wcrf-uk.org/publications)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Foods and drinks</th>
<th>Activity</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>eg. 9.30am – two slices of toast with jam, cup of tea, glass of orange juice</td>
<td>eg. 9.45am – 5 min. walk to shops</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Are there other foods, drinks or types of activity that you usually include?

Are there any times of the day when you find it difficult to manage your appetite?

How much alcohol do you usually drink in a week? One drink is half a pint of normal strength beer or lager, a small (125ml) glass of wine, or a single measure of spirits.
Setting healthy goals

Once you’ve filled in your Food, drink and activity diary, read through the rest of this booklet and think about what healthy changes you can make.

Changing a habit can be difficult, even if you know your health could benefit. It’s a good idea to make small, gradual improvements to your diet and lifestyle – small changes are much more likely to stick.

**SET SMART GOALS**

**SPECIFIC:** A defined action rather than a vague statement. For example, instead of “I’m going to walk more”, say “I’m going to go for a 15-minute walk each evening before dinner”.

**MEASURABLE:** Can you say with certainty that you have achieved your goal each day or week? For example, say “I’ll add a piece of fruit to my breakfast each morning”, rather than “I will eat more fruit”.

**ATTAINABLE:** Can you do it? For example, if your goal is to walk to the shops, are the shops within a distance you are able to walk?

**REALISTIC:** Does it fit into your routine? For example, can you make the time to do it? Or if your goal is to walk to the shops, can you get your shopping home without the car?

**TIMELY:** Decide on a date when you can start, and set target dates to reward yourself for keeping on track.

If you aren’t sure about what goals would work for you, ask your doctor, dietitian or a specialist nurse for advice.
Be a healthy weight

Maintaining a healthy weight may help to prevent you from getting cancer again.
There is growing evidence that being a healthy weight may help to prevent you from getting cancer again, and improve survival, particularly following breast cancer. Maintaining a healthy weight can also help lower your risk of heart disease, Type 2 diabetes and other diseases.

It is not uncommon to gain weight during cancer treatment. If this has happened to you, or if you are overweight, a really positive step towards good health could be to lose weight once your treatment has finished.

If you set yourself the goal of losing weight, try to eat healthily rather than following a ‘fad’ diet. Although you can lose weight on some of these diets, because they are too low in calories or cut out vital food groups, they can’t be healthily followed for a long amount of time and, when you return to your normal diet, the weight easily returns too.

Instead, aim to gradually lose weight by using this booklet to make healthy changes to your diet and add more activity into your routine: shedding 0.2–1kg (0.5–2lbs) a week is a realistic goal and one that you can achieve in a healthy way. Once you’ve achieved your goal, it’s important to continue eating healthily and being active to keep the weight off.

If you choose to set a weight goal, remember, any loss is better than none. Even losing just five per cent of your total body weight can result in real benefits to your health.

Weight and cancer

There is strong evidence that being overweight or obese increases the risk of developing bowel, oesophageal (adenocarcinoma only), pancreatic, stomach (cardia only), kidney, womb, liver, ovarian, breast (in postmenopausal women), advanced prostate and gallbladder cancer.

There are several possible reasons for this link. For example, research shows that fat cells release hormones like oestrogen, which increase the risk of cancers such as breast cancer and promotes their growth.

Studies have also shown that fat encourages the body to produce growth hormones. Having high levels of these hormones is linked to a greater risk of cancer.
Are you a healthy weight?
Measuring your BMI

Body Mass Index (BMI) is a simple way to find out whether you’re a healthy weight for your height.

1. **Measure your height, in metres** (1 ft = 0.3 m).
2. **Weigh yourself, in kilograms** (1 stone = 6.35 kg).
3. **Divide your weight by your height. Press equals. Then divide your answer by your height again** to work out your BMI.

### BMI

<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>

If you are elderly, less than 1.5 m/5 ft tall, pregnant or an athlete, BMI may be less reliable but, for most adults, it’s a good way of checking whether you’re a healthy weight.

**Example calculation:**

Weight: 70 kg

\[
\text{Height}^2 = (1.7 \text{ m} \times 1.7 \text{ m})
\]

\[
= \text{BMI of 24.2}
\]

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

Carrying too much fat around the waist is linked to a greater risk of cancer, heart disease and Type 2 diabetes, so measuring your waist is a good way of checking if you are a healthy shape.

1. Place the tape measure around your waist, at the halfway point 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 it’s level and a snug fit, but not digging into your skin.

3. Breathe normally, and measure after you have breathed out.

A healthy waist measurement is:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Waist Measurement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Men</td>
<td>Less than 94cm/37inches</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women</td>
<td>Less than 80cm/31.5inches</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

If you are underweight or lost weight during your cancer treatment, you may need to boost your calorie intake to get back into the healthy weight range (see green box on page 17). If you find this difficult, it is important to speak to your doctor, dietitian or specialist nurse who will be able to give you advice on appropriate and healthy ways to gain weight.
Move more

Aim to be active for at least 30 minutes every day, and sit less.
Regular physical activity has lots of health benefits. It can help to make you stronger and keep your weight in check. It can also help you manage fatigue and cope better following cancer treatment. There is also evidence that physical activity – before and after a cancer diagnosis – is linked to a greater chance of surviving cancer.

It is normal to become less active during cancer treatment, but once you have recovered and you’re given the ‘go-ahead’, you can start to build up your activity levels.

We recommend being active for at least 30 minutes every day. If this sounds like a lot, start by gradually increasing the amount of activity you do. You can break it up into chunks of 10 minutes to make it more manageable – this still counts. When you can do 30 minutes of activity a day comfortably, why not work towards 60 minutes? The more activity you do (within reason), the better for your health.

Visit [www.wcrf-uk.org](http://www.wcrf-uk.org) for some ideas on how to move more.

10 great reasons to be active after your cancer treatment:

1. People who are active have a better chance of survival
2. Reduces your risk of other diseases such as heart disease, Type 2 diabetes and high blood pressure
3. Helps reduce fatigue
4. Boosts your immune system
5. Helps rebuild muscle
6. Improves your shape
7. Strengthens your bones and reduces the risk of osteoporosis
8. Improves flexibility, strength and mobility
9. Burns calories, so can help you to control your weight
10. Helps reduce anxiety and depression, and improves your mood

Physical activity and cancer

There is strong evidence that being physically active reduces the risk of bowel, breast (in postmenopausal women) and womb cancer.
Working out a personal activity plan

Becoming more active can be difficult if you are recovering from cancer treatment or haven’t been active for some time. It’s best to start gently and build up gradually – even 10 minutes of activity is better than none.

Use this plan to help you work out how you can move more. The first step may be to change the way you think about physical activity, and then gradually increase the amount of activity you do each day.

1. Think of movement as an opportunity, not a chore.

What benefits will moving more have for you?

eg. I know I will feel better after I do it.
   It will help me regain my strength.
   I will no longer feel breathless after walking up the stairs.

2. Be active every day in as many ways as possible.

How can you build more activity into your everyday routine?

eg. Take the stairs instead of the lift.
   Get up to change the TV channel.
   Take the first parking spot rather than trying to find one by the entrance.
   Get off the bus one stop early.
As you become more active, why not try other forms of activity, such as yoga, Pilates, swimming, dancing, golf or even some energetic gardening or housework while listening to the radio? The key is to find something you enjoy.

Include at least 30 minutes of moderate intensity physical activity on most, or preferably all, days. Choose any activity that makes you breathe a little deeper and your heart beat a little harder than normal, eg. brisk walking.

What can you do today to work towards your 30-minute goal?

eg. Walk to the shops to pick up a newspaper or some groceries.
   Join a friend on their regular swim.
   Cycle rather than use public transport or a car.

As you become more active, why not try other forms of activity, such as yoga, Pilates, swimming, dancing, golf or even some energetic gardening or housework while listening to the radio? The key is to find something you enjoy.

See how many calories your favourite activities burn:
www.wcrf-uk.org/exercise-calculator
Eat well

The best way to keep your calories in check is to eat more lower calorie foods such as vegetables, fruit, pulses and wholegrains.
Your weight is a balancing act between the energy you put in (calories from foods and drinks) and the energy you use (for normal functions, such as your heart beating, and by being active).

The best way to keep your calories in check is to choose lower calorie foods, like vegetables and fruit, which contain a large amount of water that adds bulk but not calories. They also contain fibre, which helps keep us feeling fuller for longer. High-calorie foods, like chocolate, crisps, biscuits, burgers and fried chicken, tend to be high in fat and/or sugars, and offer little in the way of vitamins, minerals and fibre. Eating a lot of these foods can contribute to weight gain, because even small amounts contain a lot of calories.

Read front-of-pack nutrition labels
Looking at front-of-pack labels is the easiest way to see whether a food or drink is a healthy choice. You can also use them to compare products. If a food has all or mostly greens and no reds, it’s likely to be a healthier choice and you can eat it often or in larger amounts. Amber means a food is neither high nor low in a nutrient, so you can eat foods with all or mostly ambers quite often. Most foods with more than one red section should only be eaten occasionally. There are some exceptions, such as oily fish, cheese and nuts which contain healthy nutrients so can be included in small amounts as part of a healthy balanced diet.

If you are underweight, or don’t have a big appetite, it’s still important to aim to stay within the healthy weight range. Your doctor, dietitian or specialist nurse can advise you about the best way to gain weight – this may mean including some healthy, higher calorie foods in your daily diet, such as dried fruit, nuts, seeds, some oils and oily fish, like salmon and mackerel.
Low-calorie meal ideas

**Breakfast**
- Muesli (containing no added sugar or salt) or porridge with skimmed milk, sweetened with a sprinkle of cinnamon
- Wholegrain toast with grilled tomatoes and mushrooms; poached eggs; or low-sugar, low-salt baked beans
- Low-fat natural yoghurt with fresh fruit, eg. berries

**Snacks**
- Tea or coffee with skimmed milk
- Fresh fruit eg. two small plums or nectarines
- Berries or stewed fruit with low-fat natural yoghurt or low-fat rice pudding
- Reduced-fat hummus and vegetable sticks

**Lunch**
- Green salad with tinned tuna (in spring water), hard-boiled egg or some slices of lean chicken
- Wholemeal pitta or wholegrain bread roll with low-fat cream cheese and slices of tomato and cucumber
- Vegetable soup

**Dinner**
- Grilled fish or chicken, lentil burger, bean- or lentil-based casserole or chilli
- Serve these with brown rice, baked sweet potato, boiled new potatoes or wholemeal pasta; and lots of steamed vegetables (eg. broccoli, carrots, cauliflower)
Top tips to lower your calories

1. **Have at least five portions of **vegetables and fruit **a day.**

2. **Choose wholegrain** breakfast cereals, breads, pasta and rice – as they are higher in fibre, they will help keep you feeling fuller for longer.

3. **Replace some of the meat in one-pot meals like chilli, stews and casseroles with pulses like beans.**

4. **Skinless grilled, steamed or poached white fish**, like cod, haddock and pollock, is a great low-calorie alternative to meat. Fish can also work instead of meat in family favourites like tomato-based casseroles and curries – just remember it usually cooks more quickly than meat.

5. **Chew your food well** and allow at least 10 minutes before you consider having seconds. It takes time for your brain to register that you have eaten and feel full.

6. **Use lower fat dairy foods** such as semi-skimmed or skimmed milk, cottage cheese, light cream cheese and low-fat yoghurts – **low-fat natural yoghurt** is best as flavoured yoghurts are often sweetened with a lot of sugar.

7. **When eating meat, skinless white chicken and turkey meat** are low-calorie options. To cut the calories in other meats, choose the **leanest cuts** and trim as much fat away as possible before cooking.

8. **Swap your normal snack for a piece of fruit or vegetable sticks** – keep biscuits, cakes, chocolate, snack bars and crisps for occasional treats.

9. **Watch your portion sizes.** Putting food on your plate in the kitchen rather than having serving dishes on the table is a simple way to stop you from over-eating. Using a **smaller plate** can help you to eat less.
Reshape your plate

Looking at what is on your plate at mealtimes is a simple way to start checking if what you eat could be healthier.

Reshaping your plate to include at least three-quarters of wholegrains, vegetables, fruit and pulses will help to provide your body with the nutrients it needs for good health.

It can also help to lower the calories in every meal and increase the fibre content. This means your meals will keep you feeling fuller for longer on fewer calories, which can help you maintain a healthy weight.

What is a 5 A DAY portion?

One portion weighs roughly 80g*, equivalent to:

- 3 heaped tablespoons of vegetables, like carrots
- 3–4 heaped tablespoons of cooked or canned (in water) pulses, like beans, peas or lentils, or 1 tablespoon (30g) of dried pulses - pulses only count as one portion a day
- 1 cereal bowl of salad leaves, like lettuce
- 1 medium whole fruit, like an apple
- 2 small whole fruits, like plums
- 1 slice of large fruit, like melon
- 1–2 handfuls of berries, like raspberries or blueberries

* Fresh, cooked, frozen or canned (in water or fruit juice) all count.

The following only count as one portion a day and, as they can be quite high in sugar, it’s best not to have more than this:

- 1 heaped tablespoon (30g) of dried fruit, like sultanas or raisins
- 1 small glass (150ml) of unsweetened vegetable or fruit juice or smoothies
5 A DAY your way

For some people, eating five portions of vegetables and fruit a day, alongside a range of other plant foods, may seem an unappealing or unrealistic challenge despite the unquestionable health benefits.

Try our top tips for some different ways to work up to your 5 A DAY:

- **Eat a rainbow.** As different types of vegetables and fruit contain a different mix of nutrients, try to eat a variety of different coloured vegetables and fruit every day.

- **Start by eating more of what you already enjoy.** If you like apples, why not have one with breakfast as well as with your lunch?

- **Experiment with fruit.** Try adding chopped banana or berries to your cereal or porridge in the morning, or slices of pear or nectarine to low-fat natural yoghurt. You can also try stewed fruit, such as plums, apples or rhubarb, sweetened with cinnamon or vanilla essence.

- **Disguise vegetables by blending them into soups and sauces.** Carrots, onions, mushrooms, swede, squash and courgettes work well in a bolognese sauce flavoured with basil or oregano.

- **Visit local markets and learn what is in season.** Seasonal fruit and vegetables tend to be tastier, and you’ll experience the feel-good factor from supporting your local farmers.

- **Try roasting a selection of plant foods,** such as sweet potatoes, squash and parsnips, in a little olive oil.

- **A glass of pure juice counts** (but only once a day). If you don’t like orange, why not try other types such as carrot, tomato or pineapple?

- **Enjoy a fresh fruit smoothie.** Blend a portion of soft fruit with some skimmed milk or low-fat natural yoghurt to make a tasty drink.

- **Remember that a portion of pulses** (like peas, beans or lentils) **can count as one of your 5 A DAY.** Cooked in soups or casseroles, you’ll hardly notice they’re there.

If you are still struggling then try to think positively about vegetables and fruit. Make a decision to try different types and give yourself a chance to enjoy them.
How to cut down

Firstly, look again at your food diary. How often do you eat red meat and how much do you put on your plate? If you eat a lot of red meat, try to reduce your portions to about the size of a deck of cards. Also keeping a few days a week red meat-free is an easy way to reduce your intake.

Make less room for red meat and avoid processed meat

Eating processed meats (like ham, bacon and some sausages) or having a diet high in red meat (such as beef, pork and lamb) can increase your cancer risk. These meats can also be high in calories and fat, which can contribute to weight gain.

How much red meat should you have?

Red meat is a good source of nutrients so can form part of a healthy, balanced diet, but we don’t need to eat it every day. Aim for less than 500g (cooked weight, which is about 700–750g raw weight) a week to reduce your risk of bowel cancer.

What is processed meat?

Processed meat has been smoked or cured rather than simply cooked or reformed. This includes ham, bacon, salami and frankfurters. It’s best to avoid processed meat because it has been strongly linked to an increased risk of bowel and stomach (non-cardia only) cancer, and there is no nutritional need to eat it. Processed meat also tends to be high in fat and salt.

What can you eat instead?

- **Oily fish**, like salmon, fresh tuna, trout, sardines, pilchards and herrings, are rich in healthy omega-3 fats.
- **Non-oily fish**, like cod, **canned tuna** (in spring water), and **lean poultry**, such as skinless, white chicken and turkey meat, are great, low-calorie alternatives.
- **Eggs**, **reduced-fat dairy** and **meat-substitutes**, like pulses (such as beans), tofu and Quorn, are also good sources of protein so perfect alternatives to meat.
Hidden salt

Did you know that about 75 per cent of the salt in our diet comes from processed foods, such as bread, cereals, snacks and ready meals?

As well as flavouring our food, salt is also used as a preservative to keep foods fresh for longer. So not only should we think about the amount of salt we add to food when cooking or at the dinner table, we also need to take a moment to consider salt when we’re in the supermarket.

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 still a health concern. Therefore we recommend consuming no more than 6g of salt a day – that’s about one teaspoon.

How to shake off the salt

The secret to weaning yourself off salt is to do it slowly and allow your palate to adjust. Taste buds change over four to six weeks, so if you try adding less salt for a few weeks it’s likely that you will learn to enjoy the natural flavours of real food. Eating more home-made meals allows you to take more control over what you eat – flavouring your food with garlic, ginger, lemon, herbs and spices will help to make sure you don’t miss the salt.

Here’s one way you can enjoy red meat and eat less than 500g (cooked weight) a week:

**Medium portion of roast beef, lamb or pork** – 90g (about 130g raw weight)

**Pork or lamb chop** – 75g (about 110g raw weight)

**Spaghetti Bolognese, with minced beef** – 140g (about 200g raw weight)

**Medium steak** – 145g (about 210g raw weight)

Remember to check food labels. A quick way to check is to look out for a green label for salt on front-of-pack nutrition labels. Opt for no-added-salt or low-salt options where possible – for example when buying baked beans and other tinned foods, stock cubes, ready-made sauces and soups, and breakfast cereals.
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 is 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 all drinks containing alcohol can increase your risk of mouth and throat, oesophageal, breast, bowel, stomach and liver cancer. For some cancer types, alcohol is particularly harmful if you also smoke.

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, which is roughly equal to seven drinks, spread over at least three days.

Alcohol and weight gain

Alcohol can be surprisingly high in calories and offers few of the healthy nutrients your body needs.

A pint of beer or lager contains about 170 calories – similar to 3 chocolate chip cookies.

A large (250ml) glass of wine contains about 190 calories – similar to a butter croissant.

Cutting down on alcohol could help you to maintain a healthy weight, further reducing your cancer risk.
Swap soft drinks

It is easy to forget that soft drinks contain calories too. Evidence has shown that sugary drinks – such as cola, lemonade, flavoured milks and coffees, cordials and squashes like blackcurrant juice drink – can contribute to weight gain if consumed regularly or in large amounts. It is easy to drink a lot, as they don’t fill you up despite being quite high in calories.

Natural fruit juice is a source of healthy nutrients but also contains a lot of sugar and has lost most of the fibre you’d get by eating the whole fruit so it is best not to drink more than one small glass (150ml) a day. Similarly, milk provides vital nutrients like calcium, but also contains calories, so opt for unsweetened, skimmed or semi-skimmed versions.

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

Top tips for savvy drinking:

- **Opt for the smallest serving size.** Avoid double measures of spirits.
- If you drink alcohol at home, try to [pour small measures](#).
- **Alternate** between alcohol and water or low-calorie soft drinks.
- **Dilute alcoholic drinks** – ideally with a low-calorie mixer. For example, opt for a small wine spritzer with soda water rather than a large glass of wine.
- **Swap sugary soft drinks for low-calorie versions,** or better still, sparkling mineral water with a slice of lemon, lime or cucumber.
- Instead of a large glass of fruit juice, pour a small portion and **dilute the juice** with sparkling mineral water.
- Instead of sweet, frozen coffee drinks, try an **iced Americano** with a splash of milk.
- **Swap chai tea lattes** for a black tea with fresh mint leaves – you’ll be surprised how sweet it tastes.
- Rather than regular lattes, **opt for skinny versions** of less milky coffees like cappuccinos (without chocolate) or Americanos to cut the calories and sugar.
Supplements – do you need them?

Dietary supplements are often taken by people who have survived cancer in the belief that they will provide a wide range of health benefits, including helping to reduce their risk of getting cancer again.

Supplements and cancer prevention

Despite the promises made by some manufacturers, we advise against taking supplements to reduce your cancer risk – instead, aim to meet your nutritional needs by eating a varied, healthy, balanced diet.

Scientific evidence about dietary supplements and cancers is, to date, limited. The results we do have are inconsistent. Some studies suggest that high-dose supplements can actually be harmful. As the effect of taking supplements on cancer risk is unclear, it is best not to use them to protect against cancer.

We do know that whole foods provide a lot more than just vitamins and minerals – such as fibre, which is important for bowel health. For this reason it is important that supplements aren’t used as an alternative to a healthy diet.

Who may benefit?

Some people who are being treated for cancer or who have survived cancer may not be able to absorb enough nutrients from their diet or to eat a normal diet, so may benefit. In such cases, a doctor, dietitian or specialist nurse will be able to provide advice. It is always best to follow the advice of an appropriately trained health professional.

Other people who might benefit include: frail, older people with a poor appetite; women of childbearing age and new mothers; children under the age of five; people with darker skin and those who are not exposed to much sun such as housebound people or those who cover their skin.

What are dietary supplements?

Supplements contain vitamins; minerals; other components of foods including phytochemicals such lycopene, found in tomatoes; herbs; and plant materials such as ginseng, garlic and green tea. Supplements can be in pill, capsule, powder or liquid form and sometimes in high doses.
Cancer Prevention Recommendations

1  Be a healthy weight.
   Keep your weight as low as you can within the healthy range.

2  Move more.
   Be physically active for at least 30 minutes every day, and sit less.

3  Avoid high-calorie foods and sugary drinks.
   Limit high-calorie foods (particularly processed foods high in fat or added sugar, or low in fibre) and avoid sugary drinks.

4  Enjoy more grains, veg, fruit and beans.
   Eat a wide variety of wholegrains, vegetables, fruit and pulses, such as beans.

5  Limit red meat and avoid processed meat.
   Eat no more than 500g (cooked weight) a week of red meat, such as beef, pork and lamb. Eat little, if any, processed meat, such as ham and bacon.

6  For cancer prevention, don’t drink alcohol.
   For cancer prevention, it’s best not to drink alcohol. If you do, limit alcoholic drinks and follow national guidelines.

7  Eat less salt.
   Limit your salt intake to less than 6g (2.4g sodium) a day by adding less salt and eating less food processed with salt.

8  For cancer prevention, don’t rely on supplements.
   Eat a healthy diet rather than relying on supplements to protect against cancer.

Special Populations:

9  If you can, breastfeed your baby.
   If you can, breastfeed your baby for six months before adding other liquids and foods.

10 Cancer survivors should follow our Recommendations.
   After cancer treatment, the best advice is to follow the Cancer Prevention Recommendations. Check with your health professional.

   And, always remember – do not smoke or chew tobacco.
About World Cancer Research Fund

We are 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 reduce their cancer risk.

Cancer currently affects one in two people in the UK but about a third of the most common cancers could be prevented by following our Cancer Prevention Recommendations. That's around 80,000 cancer-free lives every year.

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. The CUP reviews new research findings to ensure our advice is always up-to-date. Find out more: www.wcrf-uk.org/our-research.

For the references used in this booklet or for tips and advice to reduce your cancer risk, please contact us on the details below.