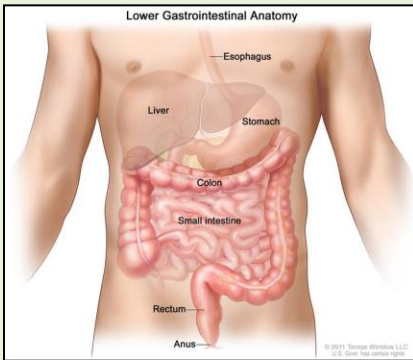


# Colorectal Cancer



## What can you do?



## Here's why

**Weight:** Being overweight or obese increases the risk of colorectal cancer in both men and women, but the link seems to be stronger in men. Having more belly fat (that is, a larger waistline) has also been linked to colorectal cancer. **Staying at a healthy weight and avoiding weight gain around the midsection may help lower your risk.**

**Physical activity:** Increasing your level of activity lowers your risk of colorectal cancer and polyps. Regular moderate activity (doing things that make you breathe as hard as you would during a brisk walk) lowers the risk, but vigorous activity might have an even greater benefit. **Increasing the intensity and amount of your physical activity may help reduce your risk.**

**Diet:** Overall, diets that are high in vegetables, fruits, and whole grains (and low in red and processed meats) have been linked with lower colorectal cancer risk, although it's not exactly clear which factors are important. Many studies have found a link between red meats (beef, pork, and lamb) or processed meats (such as hot dogs, sausage, and lunch meats) and increased colorectal cancer risk. **Limiting red and processed meats and eating more vegetables and fruits may help lower your risk. Aim for no more than 18oz a week of red meat.**

In recent years, large studies have suggested that fiber in the diet, especially from whole grains, may lower colorectal cancer risk. Research in this area is still under way.

Low levels of dietary calcium have been linked with an increased risk of colorectal cancer in some studies. Other studies suggest that increasing calcium intake may lower colorectal cancer risk. Calcium is important for a number of health reasons aside from possible effects on cancer risk. But because of the *possible increased risk* of prostate cancer in men with high calcium intake, the American Cancer Society does not recommend increasing calcium intake specifically to try to lower colorectal cancer risk. Calcium and vitamin D might work together to reduce colorectal cancer risk, as vitamin D aids in the body's absorption of calcium. Still, not all studies have found that supplements of these nutrients reduce risk.

A few studies have found a possible link between a diet that is high in magnesium and reduced colorectal cancer risk, especially among women. More research is needed to determine if this link exists.

Here's how



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