



**Cancer Awareness**  
Educate · Empower · Act

## Smart Tip – Physical Activity

**Tip:** Everyone knows exercise is good for you, but did you know that including moderate exercise in your daily routine can reduce your risk of colon and breast cancer?<sup>1</sup>

**Evidence:**

According to the National Cancer Institute (NCI), there are many studies that have shown that individuals who include physical activity in their daily lifestyle can reduce their risk of developing colon cancer by 30 to 40 percent. Similarly, studies have shown that regular exercise may decrease breast cancer risk by 20 to as much as 80 percent, especially in women who have gone through menopause. A high level of exercise during adolescence seems to be particularly protective of breast cancer<sup>1</sup>.

In addition to breast and colon cancer, there is also evidence that the risk of endometrial cancer (a cancer of the lining of the uterus) declines with increasing physical activity and that such activity may reduce endometrial cancer risks by 20 to 40 percent<sup>1</sup>.

There is also evidence that moderate exercise, 3 to 5 hours per week, can increase survival rates for those diagnosed with breast cancer.

**Recommendations:**

Encourage your children to be active and participate in physical activities, because for healthy behaviors to last a lifetime they should begin in childhood.

As an adult, you don't have to be an athlete to incorporate healthy physical activity into your lifestyle, but of course always check with your physician before beginning any new exercise routine.

The CDC recommends 2½ hours per week (30 minutes per day, 5 days per week) if you do moderate activity, such as gardening, walking briskly or ballroom dancing. If you do more vigorous activity, such as aerobics, biking, jumping rope, or jogging, the CDC recommends at least 1 hour and 15 minutes per week. Even 10 minutes at a time, spread throughout the week is beneficial. For children, it is recommended that they include some form of physical activity for an hour each day<sup>2</sup>.

- ✓ **Grab a partner:** find a friend or co-worker to exercise with. You are more likely to stick with it if you have some one to be physically active with.
- ✓ **Try to develop a routine and stick with it:** keep track of your efforts so you can feel good about yourself and the progress you are making.
- ✓ **Leave those “prized” parking spaces for others:** park your car distant from entrances to include more walking in your daily routine.
- ✓ **Take the stairs:** Start slowly and check with your physician first, but when you can, skip taking the elevator and include the stairs in a daily work out at work.

**Note: always be sure to check with your physician before beginning a new exercise routine.**

### **Resources for More Information:**

- National Cancer Institute:  
<http://www.cancer.gov/cancertopics/factsheet/physical-activity-qa>.
- Program on Breast Cancer and Environmental Risk Factors (BCERF):  
<http://envirocancer.cornell.edu/factsheet/Diet/fs19.exercise.pdf>.
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention:
  - Be Active Your Way: 2008 Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans, Publication No U0038, CDC.
  - <http://www.cdc.gov/physicalactivity/everyone/getactive/index.html>.
  - CDC Model Activity Routines ( [www.cdc.gov/physicalactivity](http://www.cdc.gov/physicalactivity)).
- Shape up the Nation: [www.shapeupthenation.com/www/works/model](http://www.shapeupthenation.com/www/works/model) for information on employee wellness programs.
- Suffolk Bicycle Riders Association: <http://www.sbraweb.org/>.

### **References:**

1. National Cancer Institute, 2009. *Fact Sheet: Physical Activity and Cancer: Questions and Answers*. United States Institutes of Health:  
<http://www.cancer.gov/cancertopics/factsheet/physical-activity-qa>.
2. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2008. *Physical Activity Guidelines*. Division of Nutrition, Physical Activity and Obesity. November, 2008:  
<http://www.cdc.gov/physicalactivity/everyone/guidelines/index.html>.