

FEBRUARY IS

National Cancer Prevention Month

by B.Kay Sugg

More than 40% of all cancer diagnoses can be linked to a preventable cause. That means that almost half the cancers of the 1.9 million people who are diagnosed each year could potentially have been prevented.

Most of us know that some habits, such as smoking, are linked to certain cancers like lung cancer. But there are also common preventative measures that will help to protect you from getting a wide range of cancers. In addition to helping to prevent cancer, most recommendations will also contribute to overall better health.

See below for measures you can take to help prevent cancer:

Focus on Healthy Habits

HEALTHY WEIGHT

Maintain a healthy weight. If you are overweight, start by losing ten pounds. Even that amount of weight loss makes a difference in your risk for various cancers.

EXERCISE

Incorporate regular exercise into your weekly schedule. It's easy to be sedentary during the pandemic; changing your habits can begin as easily as simply taking a walk at lunchtime. Try to exercise at for at least 30 minutes three times a week.

HEALTHY DIET

Eat a healthy diet which includes fruits and vegetables, whole grains, and beans along with drinking plenty of water.

SAFE SEX

Practice safe sex. Sexually transmitted infections and diseases can increase your risk for certain cancers. Limit the number of sexual partners you have, and use a condom.

Stop or Limit These Things

TOBACCO

Don't use tobacco. Whether you smoke, chew or vape, you can decrease your cancer risk by stopping. Limit the amount of red and processed meat in your diet. Replace some of the red meat you eat with healthier proteins like fish, chicken, and legumes (lentils and beans).

SUNLIGHT

Avoid exposure to direct sunlight, especially during the hours of 10:00 a.m. and 3:00 p.m., when the sun's rays are strongest. If you spend a lot of time in the sun, protect yourself by wearing sunscreen, and use sunglasses that protect from the UVA and UVB rays of the sun.

LATE NIGHTS

Nothing beats a great series on your favorite streaming service. However, binging tv, movies, or game-playing late into the night on a regular basis can actually impact your health. Most adults need seven or more hours of sleep each night. Try to limit the late night activities to no more than once or twice per week, and don't rely on caffeine or energy drinks as a pick-me-up.

Preventative Medical Care

ANNUAL PHYSICAL

Get regular medical care. Not only does having annual physical exams and body chemistry evaluated alert you to potential issues, but seeing the same medical group enables your doctor to see your history over time, which can help signal when there may be changes in less-noticeable aspects of your health or lab work.

VACCINES

Talk with your doctor about vaccines that protect against viral infections known to increase cancer risk, like Human papillomavirus (HPV) and Hepatitis B; while not recommended for everyone, certain adults are at greater risk.

CANCER SCREENING

Get screened for colorectal cancer. Most colorectal cancer cases start as precancerous polyps, so getting screened is the most effective way to reduce your risk. Polyps can be removed before they become cancerous.

Sources: The Mayo Clinic, <https://www.mayoclinic.org/>
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, <https://www.cdc.gov/>
National Cancer Institute, <https://www.cancer.gov/>



Buffalo HUMMUS

INGREDIENTS

- 2 (15-ounce) cans chickpeas, drained and rinsed
 - 5 cloves garlic, peeled
 - 1/4 cup water (or 2 tablespoons water + 2 tablespoons olive oil)
 - 1/4 cup tahini (optional)
 - 1/4 cup crumbled blue cheese
 - 4–8 tablespoons hot sauce, to taste
 - 2 tablespoons freshly-squeezed lemon juice
 - 1.5 teaspoons smoked paprika
 - 1 teaspoon ground cumin
 - 1/2 teaspoon salt
 - 1/4 teaspoon freshly-ground black pepper
- (optional toppings: olive oil, chopped roasted red peppers, thinly-sliced green onions, extra crumbled blue cheese)

Hummus is not only delicious, it is a great source of protein. In recent years, hummus has become a popular appetizer in restaurants and a favorite snack at home and work. This month we're sharing one of our favorite recipes for hummus, by Ali Martin. Check out her blog, Gimme Some Oven (gimmesomeoven.com) for more great recipes!

INSTRUCTIONS

Add all ingredients to a food processor or blender (*start with only 4 tablespoons of hot sauce, if you don't like much heat). Pulse until combined. Taste, and add more hot sauce to taste, if desired.

Serve with your desired dippers, garnished with optional toppings if desired.

Source: <https://www.gimmesomeoven.com/buffalo-hummus-recipe>

