

SUNDAY

MONDAY

TUESDAY

WEDNESDAY

THURSDAY



# REDUCE YOUR RISK

By // Michelle Jacoby

Love 'em or hate 'em, as women, breasts are a significant part of who we are—which may be why having breast cancer is our biggest fear. While you can't eliminate risk altogether, there are things you can do to decrease your chance of developing the disease. Here's a start.

## LIMIT ALCOHOL CURB THE COCKTAILS

The more alcohol you drink, the greater your risk of developing breast cancer. If you choose to drink alcohol—including beer, wine or liquor—limit yourself to no more than one drink a day. Any more than that increases your breast cancer risk to one-and-a-half-times that of someone who doesn't drink at all.

## DON'T SMOKE EXTINGUISH YOUR HABIT

Accumulating evidence suggests a link between smoking and breast cancer risk, particularly in premenopausal women. It also bears repeating that not smoking is one of the best things you can do for your overall health.

## BE PHYSICALLY ACTIVE

### GET UP AND GO, GO, GO!

Physical activity can help you maintain a healthy weight, which, in turn, helps prevent breast cancer. For most healthy adults, the Department of Health and Human Services recommends at least 150 minutes per week of moderate aerobic activity or 75 minutes of vigorous aerobic activity weekly, plus strength training at least twice a week.

## LIMIT HORMONE THERAPY

### SMALL DOSE, SHORT-TERM USE

Long-term hormone replacement therapy increases the risk of breast cancer. If you're taking hormone therapy for menopausal symptoms, ask your doctor about other





options, including non-hormonal therapies such as physical activity. If the benefits of short-term hormone therapy outweigh the risks, use the lowest dose that works for you.

## MINIMIZE RADIATION REDUCE YOUR EXPOSURE

Medical-imaging methods use high doses of radiation, which have been linked with breast cancer risk. Reduce your exposure by undergoing such tests only when absolutely necessary. If your doctor recommends a test or x-ray, be sure you understand why. If you're still not certain, get a second opinion.

## EAT RIGHT YOU ARE WHAT YOU EAT

Harvard researchers recently found that women with high levels of carotenoid (found in fruits and vegetables) in their blood, have a lower risk of developing breast cancer. The American Cancer Society recommends eating five or more servings of fruits and veggies a day, limiting processed and red meats, and choosing whole grains to help reduce the risks of all types of cancer.

## KNOW YOUR HISTORY GENERATION TO GENERATION

About 5 to 10 percent of breast cancer is hereditary. And your father's family counts as much as your mother's. Men can carry some of the same aberrant genes, such as BRCA1 and 2, that up the risk of not only breast cancer, but also ovarian cancer in women. Multiple diagnoses on either side of your family can be a clue to a hereditary link.

Sources: Mayo.org, Prevention.org

# TALKING PERSONAL SAFETY...



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### ...FROM AN ABDUCTION SURVIVOR.

I was only 9, playing at a safe playground while my parents played tennis nearby. A clean-cut, young man approached me. He said he was a magazine photographer and he used every lure in the book to get me to leave with him. Fortunately, I was able to escape before his terrifying intentions were realized, but the lessons learned then, and from teaching abduction prevention to kids over the years, are permanently seared into my memory.

The rules of abduction prevention are basic to personal safety for both adults and children:

- + **Be aware** – When walking around or in public places, stay alert, not absorbed in your phone.
- + **Trust your instincts** – When teaching abduction prevention, children often told me about someone “weird” who made them feel uncomfortable. Many also described near-miss abduction attempts. As humans, we are blessed with incredible radar for signaling danger *if we pay attention*. When getting that vibe, create distance and seek a safe haven.
- + **Know your limits** – Smart kids aren't ruled by stupid peer pressure. If something feels like a bad idea, just say, “No, thanks.” As my sister used to say, “No is a complete sentence.”
- + **Never get impaired** – Smart kids always stay in control. As my college daughter says, “Drunks think they're funny, but they're really just annoying” ... and dangerous. The vast majority of serious incidents for teens and young adults involve alcohol.
- + **Stick together** – There is strength in numbers and, hopefully, more common sense. Stick with friends who truly have your back and bring out the best in you.
- + **Use common sense** – Avoid high-risk situations, think ahead, and have a plan for what to do if you find yourself in an unsafe situation (your ride is drunk, someone is making you uncomfortable). Have an escape strategy and a no-consequences call pass for your parents to come to your rescue.

As Jeff Cooper, an expert in personal safety, once said, “Safety is something that happens between your ears.”

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