

Healthy Workplace

Your monthly Anthem wellness newsletter



Stay Ahead of Breast Cancer

About one in eight women in the U.S. will get invasive breast cancer. It's a scary thought, but death rates from breast cancer have been dropping since 1989. Information is power – the more you know the more you can help yourself, and the women you love take steps to help prevent or discover cancer early.



So what is breast cancer?

Breast cancer happens when cells in the breast split and grow out of control. The most common types of breast cancer are found in milk glands and milk ducts. When cancer cells break through normal breast tissue barriers and spread to other parts of the body, the cancer is invasive. When cancer cells stay in one area of the breast without spreading, the cancer is noninvasive.

Why should you get screened?

Breast cancer screenings can often detect cancer before you have symptoms or before a lump can be felt. And since the size of the cancer and the stage when it's found is strongly related to survival, it's important to talk to your doctor about your risk factors and when you should start getting regular mammograms. This low-dose X-ray is the best way to find cancer early. Are you likely to get breast cancer?

There are a few common links among women with breast cancer, called risk factors. They give you a greater chance of getting breast cancer. But having one or even several risk factors doesn't mean you'll get the disease. Just be aware of these risk factors for breast cancer:

- Getting older – most breast cancers are found in women at least 55 years old
- Having a family member with breast cancer/inherited genetic factors
- Drinking alcohol – women who have two to three drinks a day have a 20% higher risk than women who don't drink

Sources <https://file.anthem.com/MANSH0305ABS.pdf>

- Having your first child after age 30
- Starting menopause after age 55
- Starting your period before age 12
- Actively or recently using birth control pills
- Not being physically active
- Being overweight or obese

Pay attention to symptoms

First, do a breast self-exam. This is a self-check you do on your own breasts to look and feel for symptoms, lumps and changes in breast size and shape. Symptoms vary from person to person. Keep in mind, having any of these doesn't mean you have breast cancer. But if you do have one or more of these 8 symptoms, be sure to talk to your doctor as soon as possible:



- A new lump in the breast or armpit
- Thickening or swelling of part of the breast
- Irritation or dimpling of the skin
- Red or flaky skin on the breast or nipple
- Pulling in of the nipple or nipple pain
- Nipple discharge other than breast milk
- Change in breast size or shape
- Pain in any part of the breast

Remember, even if you have no symptoms at all, testing could detect breast cancer at the earliest possible time. Mammogram screenings aren't 100% accurate, but they're the best tool available. Talk to your doctor about a screening plan and schedule your mammogram.



Schedule your screening

Stay healthy — stay ahead of cancer. Don't put your breast health on the back burner. Schedule a screening today, at a facility near you.

Creamy Roasted Pumpkin Soup

This pumpkin soup recipe is creamy AND healthy! It calls for roasted pumpkin for maximum flavor. This roasted pumpkin soup recipe would look lovely on your holiday dinner table, and leftovers would go great with sandwiches or salads the next day. Recipe yields 4 bowls or 6 cups of soup.



Ingredients

- 4 tablespoons olive oil, divided
- One 4-pound sugar pie pumpkin
- 1 large yellow onion, chopped
- 4 large or 6 medium garlic cloves, pressed or minced
- 1/2 teaspoon sea salt
- 1/2 teaspoon ground
- Tiny dash of cayenne pepper (optional, if you like spice)
- Freshly ground black pepper
- 4 cups (32 ounces) vegetable broth
- 1/2 cup full fat coconut milk or heavy cream
- 2 tablespoons maple syrup or honey

Directions

- ◇ Preheat oven to 425 degrees and line a baking sheet with parchment paper for easy cleanup. Carefully halve the pumpkin and scoop out the seeds (you can roast the seeds if you'd like—but you won't need them for this recipe).
- ◇ Slice each pumpkin halve in half to make quarters. Brush or rub 1 tablespoon olive oil over the flesh of the pumpkin and place the quarters, cut sides down, onto the baking sheet. Roast for 35 minutes or longer, until the orange flesh is easily pierced through with a fork. Set it aside to cool for a few minutes.
- ◇ Heat the remaining 3 tablespoons olive oil in a large Dutch oven or heavy-bottomed pot over medium heat. Once the oil is shimmering, add onion, garlic and salt to the skillet. Stir to combine. Cook, stirring occasionally until onion is translucent, about 8 to 10 minutes. In the meantime, peel the pumpkin skin off the pumpkins and discard the skin.
- ◇ Add the pumpkin flesh, cinnamon, nutmeg, cloves, cayenne pepper (if using), and a few twists of freshly ground black pepper. Use your stirring spoon to break up the pumpkin a bit. Pour in the broth. Bring the mixture to a boil, then reduce heat and simmer for about 15 minutes, to give the flavors time to meld.

- ◇ While the soup is cooking, toast the pepitas in a medium skillet over medium-low heat, stirring frequently, until fragrant, golden and making little popping noises. You want them to be nice and toasty, but not burnt. Transfer pepitas to a bowl to cool.
- ◇ Once the pumpkin mixture is done cooking, stir in the coconut milk and maple syrup. Remove the soup from heat and let it cool slightly. You can use an immersion blender to blend this soup in the pot. I prefer to use my stand blender, which yields the creamiest results—working in batches, transfer the contents of the pan to a blender (do not fill your blender past the maximum fill line!). Securely fasten the blender's lid and use a kitchen towel to protect your hand from steam escaping from the top of the blender as you purée the mixture until smooth. Transfer the puréed soup to a serving bowl and repeat with the remaining batches.
- ◇ Taste and adjust if necessary (I thought the soup was just right as is, but you might want to add more coconut milk for extra creaminess/milder flavor, or maple syrup to make it a little sweeter).
- ◇ Ladle the soup into individual bowls. Sprinkle pepitas over the soup and serve. Let leftover soup cool completely before transferring it to a proper storage container and refrigerating it for up to 4 days (leftovers taste even better the next day!). Or, freeze this soup for up to 3 months.

Notes

- ◇ **Make it dairy free:** Use coconut milk, not heavy cream.
- ◇ **Make it vegan:** Use coconut milk and maple syrup.

If you want to use canned pumpkin: Instead of roasting the pumpkin, you can substitute two to three cans of pumpkin purée. Just skip steps 1 and 2, and add two cans of pumpkin purée in step 4. You'll still want to blend the soup for the best texture; add more pumpkin purée at that point if you'd like thicker soup.

Did you know?

Pumpkin has a range of fantastic health benefits to include into your diet. Pumpkin is good source of vitamin C, magnesium, potassium and fiber, including being one of the best-known sources of beta carotene. Beta carotene is a powerful antioxidant that the body converts into vitamin A and gives orange vegetables and fruits their vibrant color. Beta carotene is thought to play a role protecting cells, boosting the immune system and helping to keep the reproductive system healthy.



Wellness Corner

Hello everyone! Cerina from Connecticut here. During these upcoming cooler months, I like to make sure I am boosting my immune system as I tend to spend more time indoors. In addition to staying hydrated, getting plenty of rest and taking proper supplements such as Vitamin D3, Zinc, and Vitamin C, I like to supercharge my diet with immune boosting superfoods. One way I do this, is by making a large batch of soothing **Turmeric Ginger Tea**. Make this tonic when you're feeling sick, need to de-stress, have an upset stomach, or just need something cozy when it's cold outside. I like to drink this soothing tea first thing in the morning during my quiet time as well as right before bed as part of my evening bed time ritual.



Here are a few health benefits of Turmeric and Ginger

- Aids in Reducing Inflammation
- Heart Healthy
- Pain Relief
- Supercharged with Antioxidants
- Boosts the Immune system

Turmeric

Turmeric is a spice that comes from the turmeric plant. It's major active ingredient is curcumin which gives curry its vibrant yellowish color. It has powerful anti-inflammatory effects and is a very strong antioxidant. This powerful spice's treasure lies in curcumin's benefits. Many high-quality studies show that it has major benefits for your body and brain. Researchers are investigating whether it may help play a role in inflammatory conditions from arthritis to ulcerative colitis. However, the curcumin content of turmeric is not that high. It's around 3%, by weight. Most of the studies on this herb are using turmeric extracts that contain mostly curcumin itself, with dosages usually exceeding 1 gram per day. It would be very difficult to reach these levels just using the turmeric spice in your foods. Therefore, if you want to experience the full effects, you need to take a supplement that contains significant amounts of curcumin. Unfortunately, curcumin is poorly absorbed into the bloodstream. It helps to consume black pepper with it, which contains piperine, a natural substance that enhances the absorption of curcumin by 2,000%.



Turmeric Ginger Tea

Turmeric ginger tea can be made in a variety of ways. If possible, using fresh turmeric root and fresh ginger will provide the most advantages. However, organic turmeric powder and ground ginger root will also be excellent bases. Beyond these roots, other ingredients can add not only extra taste but extra benefits.



Ingredients

- 8 cups water
- 2 tablespoon of fresh grated ginger root or 1 tsp ground ginger
- 4 cinnamon sticks
- 2 tablespoon of fresh grated turmeric root or 1 tsp ground turmeric
- 1/4 tsp cayenne pepper (optional)
- Lemons

Directions

- Peel the ginger and turmeric root and grate or dice into chunks.
- In a large pot or saucepan over high heat, combine the ginger and turmeric (root), cinnamon sticks and water. Bring to a boil. Then turn to low heat and let simmer for 10-15 minutes.
- If using turmeric powder, add along with cayenne and simmer on low heat for another 10 minutes; stirring occasionally.
- Remove from heat.
- Set a small strainer over serving glasses and divide between two mugs. If the tonic is too potent for you, dilute with more hot/warm water and fresh lemon juice.
- Store (strained) leftovers in the refrigerator up to 2-3 days. Reheat on the stovetop until just warm.

Notes:

- Make this recipe in bulk and store it in a large mason jar in the fridge.
- Black pepper increases the absorption of turmeric's health properties by 3,000%. It also adds a smoky, savory flair to your tea recipe.
- Adding a splash of fresh lemon adds an extra boost of vitamin C.
- Try adding raw honey to sweeten a cup of this tea. Honey provides plentiful antioxidants.



Wellness Bites for your Quick Wellness Needs!

5 Ways to Boost Breast Health

How to be healthier and protect against breast cancer

Exercise and good eating are not only a one-two punch for better health, but this powerful duo also lowers your risk of developing breast cancer. Or, if you are diagnosed with it, exercise and a healthy diet can increase your odds of beating the disease. Cleveland Clinic Surgical breast oncologist Stephanie Valente, DO, recommends five things you can do to boost breast health.



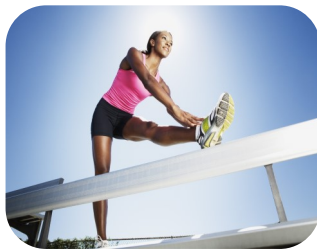
Maintain a healthy weight

The relationship between obesity and breast cancer is not fully understood, but we know it's important for women to keep a healthy weight to reduce risk. The production of estrogen in women's fat tissue after menopause is a major factor. In obese women, estrogen-sensitive breast cancer tissues are exposed to more estrogen than in women of a healthy weight. This can stimulate the growth and progression of breast cancer.

Women who are obese — with a body mass index (BMI) of 30 or higher — tend to have more advanced disease at the time their breast cancer is diagnosed than women with a BMI below 25. These women are also at greater risk for the disease spreading and are more likely to die of breast cancer. Breast cancer survivors who are obese also run a greater risk of the disease coming back.

Exercise as a preventative measure

Women who are physically active are 25% less likely to develop breast cancer than women who are sedentary. Research shows that regular exercise can help prevent breast cancer by boosting immune function, warding off obesity and lowering estrogen and insulin levels.



Along with helping you maintain your weight, exercise can also improve bone mass, which is a critical issue for breast cancer survivors who have undergone chemotherapy and endocrine therapy. These medications are tied to lower bone mineral density, which increases the risk of osteoporosis and bone fractures.

From daily activities such as house cleaning to programs designed specifically for cancer patients, there's something out there for everyone.

"Just 30 minutes a day and at least four to five days each week is enough to get you started," says Dr. Valente. "Walking is the easiest type of exercise to maintain, but always listen to your body."

Whether you're trying to prevent breast cancer, are fighting breast cancer, or have survived breast cancer, exercise can help.

Stay hydrated and eat a healthy, balanced diet

Fill your plate with at least five to eight servings of fruits and vegetables daily. In addition, broccoli, cabbage, kale, watermelon and whole grains are cancer-fighting foods. It's important to increase your intake of omega-3 fatty acids, which are found in walnuts, fish, soybeans and pumpkin seeds. Steer clear of refined sugars and fats — they're notorious for not only packing on the weight to your waist line, but with weight gain comes a higher risk of breast cancer, too.

"Don't forget to stay hydrated, too," says Dr. Valente. "Keep a water bottle on hand and aim for 2 to 3 liters of water a day."

Get educated on reading food labels while at the grocery store. Take into consideration how many calories a canned item or packaged food has and always look at the serving size. This way, you'll be able to limit your intake of any bad-for-you foods. It's believed that good nutrition can help protect against a host of cancers, including breast cancer, and can slow or prevent the disease's progression or recurrence.

"Creating a healthy meal plan and exercising frequently can help put you on track to maintaining a healthy weight," says Dr. Valente. "Talk to your doctor or dietitian to help get you started on the right foot."

Limit alcohol to one drink per day

Women who drink more than one alcoholic beverage per day — even just two drinks — are at an increased risk of developing breast cancer. Women who have three or more drinks per week after being diagnosed with breast cancer run a greater risk that their breast cancer will recur.

According to the American Cancer Society, the amount of alcohol consumed is important, not the type of alcoholic drink. A serving of an alcoholic drink is defined as 12 ounces of beer, 5 ounces of wine and 1 1/2 ounces of hard liquor.

Take your vitamins, especially vitamin D

Women with low levels of vitamin D may run a greater risk of developing breast cancer, and breast cancer survivors with low vitamin D levels may have a greater risk of disease recurrence. Research also suggests that high vitamin D levels are linked to better breast cancer survival rates. The best source of vitamin D is from the sun, so women who don't get a lot of daily sun exposure can be deficient in vitamin D. However, if you're in the sun frequently, don't forget to apply sunscreen to lower your risk of skin cancer. Have your vitamin D level checked. If your levels are low, talk to your doctor about taking a vitamin D3 supplement. "Your health is in your hands," says Dr. Valente. "By making these five healthy habits part of your life, you not only fight breast cancer, but many other cancers and diseases while enjoying more energy, lower stress levels and better moods."



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