



Help protect against BOWEL CANCER!

Bowel cancer is a major health problem in Australia, with 1 in 12 Australians likely to develop bowel cancer before the age of 85. This equals 80 Australians dying every week from a disease that is up to 75% preventable through protective lifestyle factors!

So how can you increase your protection against bowel cancer?

Tip 1

Watch your tummy fat

Keeping your waist line at a healthy range (ie. below 94cm for men and 80cm for women) can decrease the risk of bowel cancer. Being physically active and eating according to energy needs is the best way to keep your waist line in check.



Tip 2

Keep up the fibre!

A high fibre diet, including whole grains and wholemeal foods, can reduce bowel cancer risk. Fibre speeds up excretion of waste from the body which decreases contact time with potential carcinogens. It also makes us feel full which helps us maintain a healthy weight range and ensure we aren't eating more energy than we need.



Tip 3

Opt for leaner cuts of meat

Eating less red meat and processed meat can also help to reduce bowel cancer risk. Processing meats such as ham and salami can produce cancer causing substances. Cooking meats at lower temperatures for longer is also a safer option, reducing the potential for carcinogenic substances to form. Eating leaner cut meats is also recommended to reduce fat intake and help in keeping a healthy body weight.



Tip 4

Drink wise - avoid or limit alcohol

Keeping alcohol intake low (ie. at 2 or less standard drinks a day) or avoiding alcohol all together is important for reducing the risk of bowel cancer. There is evidence that alcohol is carcinogenic to humans and is causally related to many cancers, including bowel cancer.

Tip 5

Quit smoking or remain a non-smoker

Bowel cancer risk is decreased in people who don't smoke. People who smoke are encouraged to speak to their doctor and call the QUIT line on 13 7848. The QUIT line provides access to support and opportunities to learn about individual smoking patterns to help people to increase control over their smoking. QUIT also provides assistance with designing quitting plans.



Tip 6

Stay active!

There's convincing evidence that being physically active can increase your protection against bowel cancer. Being physically active regulates hormones such as insulin-like growth factor and oestrogen, and increases the speed that food passes through the bowel. The Australian Physical Activity Guidelines recommend 30 minutes of physical activity preferably everyday for good health and 60 minutes of physical activity to reduce your bowel cancer risk. It is also important to be physically active in as many ways as you can and look for opportunities to move more. Including some vigorous activity promotes even greater health and fitness benefits.



Finally

In previous years it was thought that chronic disease risk factors were out of our control. Evidence continues to evolve in the area of lifestyle factors that helps us to be in more control of our health.