Cancer is a complex disease. Many factors – some within our control and some not – can increase individual cancer risk. Being overweight and eating an unhealthy diet have been linked to increased cancer risk, but no available evidence has proven that single foods cause or cure cancer.

**CONTROLLABLE FACTORS TO REDUCE CANCER RISK**

- Eat a Balanced Diet
- Be Physically Active
- Don’t Smoke
- Drink Alcohol in Moderation
- Maintain a Healthy Weight

**WHAT IS A HAZARD?**
Something that is capable of causing harm under some circumstances.

**WHAT IS RISK?**
The chance (high or low) that a hazard will cause harm under certain circumstances.

**Cancer is a hazard, but an individual’s risk of getting cancer depends on a number of factors – some controllable and some not.**

**LIFETIME (ABSOLUTE) RISK**
The risk of developing or dying from cancer sometime during a person’s lifetime, based on average characteristics of the U.S. population as a whole including age, gender, environment and lifestyle.

**RELATIVE RISK**
A statistical measurement in research used to compare the response of two different groups to a particular risk.

**INDIVIDUAL (PERSONAL) RISK**
The risk of developing or dying from cancer based on many factors, including a person’s age, birthplace, gender, genetics, environment, lifestyle and socioeconomic traits.

**UNDERSTANDING RISK IN RESEARCH REPORTS AND MEDIA HEADLINES**

- The lifetime risk for developing colorectal cancer is 4.5% or about 1 in 20.
- 50g of processed meat a day - less than two slices of bacon - increases the chance of developing colorectal cancer by 18%.

**Translation**
Total lifetime risk of developing colorectal cancer increases from 4.5% to 5.3%.

**For comparison**
Smoking cigarettes increases the chance of developing lung cancer by 2,500%.

**DON’T CONFUSE HAZARD AND RISK**
A hazard is not a risk until you are exposed to that hazard at a level that will cause harm.

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