

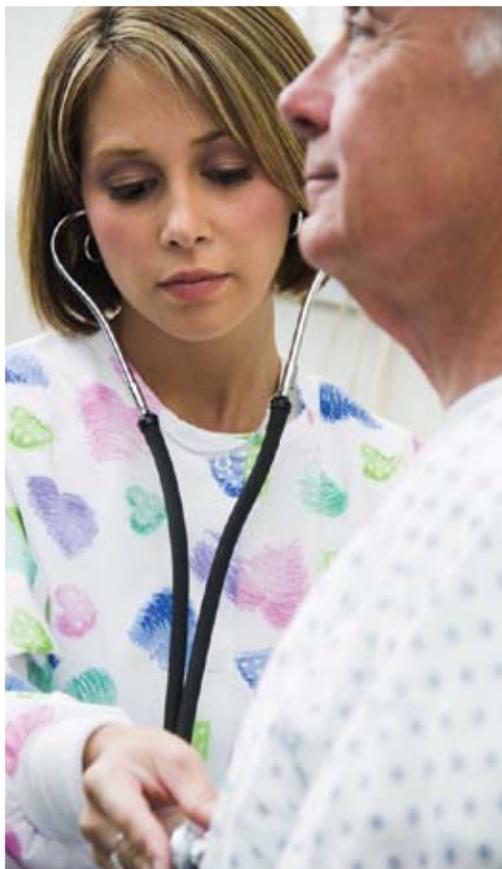


**CLICK** on this symbol throughout this e-newsletter for links to interactive simple solutions.

**In This Issue:** • Meet Your Non-physician Providers: NPs, CNMs, and PAs • Tips for a Healthier Easter Basket • Can Coffee Help Fight Cancer?



# HealthyLiving



## When the Doctor Isn't a Doctor

The next time you have a checkup or sick visit, the person who takes care of you may be a qualified medical professional who is not actually a doctor. A government report says almost half of all doctors work side by side with nurse practitioners (NPs), physician assistants (PAs), and certified nurse midwives (CNMs). These providers have advanced education and clinical training, and must pass specialized exams before they can become licensed to practice.

NPs, PAs, and CNMs allow the medical practice to take care of more patients and reach patients in places where they might otherwise not have access to health care. When writing prescriptions, ordering tests, and making diagnoses, they follow established guidelines that have been agreed upon with the doctor with whom they are working. Sometimes, especially in rural areas, the doctor may not be on site, but available by telephone.

### **PAs are qualified to deliver a broad range of care.**

- They conduct physical exams, take down medical histories, diagnose and treat illnesses, order and interpret tests, assist in surgery, and prescribe medicine.
- In order to practice, they must be registered by their state after completing an accredited PA program after college and passing a national certifying exam. In addition, PAs must complete 100 hours of continuing medical education every 2 years and pass a recertifying exam every 6 years.

### **CNMs have been practicing in the US since the 1920s.**

- They provide primary health care to women of childbearing age, including: prenatal care, labor and delivery care, care after birth, gynecological exams, newborn care, assistance with family planning decisions, preconception care, menopause management, and counseling in health maintenance and disease prevention. CNMs attend almost 8% of the births in the United States.
- They are registered nurses who have graduated from an accredited nurse-midwifery education program and have passed a national certification exam.

### **NPs are registered nurses with master's degrees, or even doctorates.**

- They perform and interpret lab work, x-rays, and other tests; diagnose and treat infections, injuries, and acute and chronic diseases; prescribe medications and other treatments; manage patients' overall care; and educate and counsel patients.
- They have graduate, advanced education beyond their registered nurse preparation. They are licensed in all states and most are nationally certified in their specialty area. NPs specialize in many areas, including cancer.

They all work closely with doctors to ensure that you are receiving the best care possible.



**CLICK HERE** to learn more about the different health professionals who treat people with cancer.

## Radon Gas and Cancer

Most people know that smoking cigarettes can lead to lung cancer. But the leading cause of lung cancer in nonsmokers is exposure to radon gas, according to the US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). In fact, it accounts for 20,000 deaths from lung cancer each year. In addition, radon gas from water can cause stomach cancer.

Radon occurs naturally, and it sometimes becomes concentrated in homes built on soil with natural uranium deposits. Rarely, radon contaminates public wells or other

ground water. The radon from soil and water is released into the air, where it's breathed in. Studies have found that the risk of lung cancer is higher for those who have lived for many years in a radon-contaminated house. (Still, the lung cancer risk from radon is much lower than that from smoking.)

If you drink contaminated water, you are at risk for stomach cancer, although studies show that your risk of stomach cancer from swallowing water with radon in it is much less than your risk of lung cancer

from breathing in radon.

Because radon gas can't be seen or smelled, the only way to know whether it's a problem in your home or water is to test for it. The EPA can help you test your home for radon easily and inexpensively, and teach you what to do if your levels are too high.



**CLICK HERE** for the EPA brochure *A Citizen's Guide to Radon*, and **HERE** for more information on the link between radon and cancer.

## A Healthier Easter

For those who celebrate it, Easter is a time of joy and being with family. It's also a time of extra calories and sugar, especially for children. Easter baskets are traditionally filled with all manner of chocolate, sugary candy, but you can put together an exciting Easter basket that's still healthy and fun.



- It's hard to resist the colorful Easter-themed candy. If you do include some in your Easter baskets, limit the amount, and dole it out over several days.
- Include fruit, which provides sweetness, but also good-for-you vitamins.
- Give books, coloring books, crayons, stickers, stuffed animals, and bubbles.
- Consider adding in a quirky or unexpected item that could start a family tradition, like a bathing suit or other clothing, an ant farm or butterfly garden, or a collectable doll or figurine.

## Have pets? Stay Healthy during Chemo

Your pets are a part of your family. They improve your mood and calm you. But if you're receiving chemotherapy for cancer, your immune system is weaker than usual, and your pets' germs could make you sick. By taking a few precautions, you can keep Spot and Felix on your lap while you stay healthy.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention offers these tips:

- Avoid direct contact with pet urine and feces by wearing gloves when you clean up waste from outside or from a litter box. Wash your hands immediately afterward. Better yet, ask a friend

or relative to handle this chore.

- Wash your hands with soap and water after playing with, caring for, or petting animals, especially before preparing or eating food and drink.
- Avoid being scratched or bitten by your pet. If you are, wash the areas with soap and water immediately.
- Don't allow your pet to lick your mouth, open cuts, or wounds.
- Keep your pet clean, and keep regular veterinary appointments for a healthy pet.



## Can coffee lower cancer risk?

That morning cup of coffee is a treasured ritual for many Americans. Some of us can't even get through the day without it. But is it good for us? The caffeine in coffee can provide a short-term performance boost, improve mood, and help relieve headaches. But too much can interfere with sleep, trigger migraines, and cause digestive problems.

Now researchers have linked coffee drinking to a lowered risk of some types of cancer. In one study, researchers at the Harvard School of Public Health found that men who drank 6 or more cups of coffee a day had a slightly lower risk of developing prostate cancer. In another study, women who drank more than 4 cups a day had a 25% lower risk of endometrial cancer.

Coffee may lower risk by affecting the way hormones like insulin work in the body. Or it could be compounds that reduce inflammation, which may be related to cancer risk. Researchers aren't sure.

But 4 to 6 cups a day is a lot of coffee. And if you take it with cream and sugar, the added fat and

calories are likely to wipe out any benefit. According to Colleen Doyle, MS, RD, American Cancer Society director of nutrition and physical activity, the surest steps any of us can take to lower cancer risk are: don't smoke, eat well, and be physically active.



## Exercise for Life

Getting more exercise can help you live longer and lower your cancer risk. American Cancer Society Director of Nutrition and Physical Activity Colleen Doyle, MS, RD, says for nonsmokers, the most important way to lower risk is to change what you weigh, what you eat, and how active you are. (For smokers, quitting is still number one.)

Regular exercise may help prevent some cancers by regulating hormones that help cancer cells grow, and by strengthening your immune system. Evidence shows that physical activity reduces the risk of breast, colon, endometrium, and prostate cancer, as well as chronic diseases including heart disease, diabetes, osteoporosis, and hypertension.

Adults should get at least 150 minutes of moderate-intensity or 75 minutes of vigorous-intensity activity each week, preferably spread throughout the week.

Moderate-intensity activities are those at the level of a brisk walk. Vigorous-intensity activities increase your heart rate and breathing, and make you sweat. Examples include running, aerobic dance, and soccer.

But even lower amounts of activity can help. And for people who haven't exercised in a while, it makes sense to start slowly and build up gradually. Just clear any new activity with your doctor.

Kids should get at least 1 hour of moderate- or vigorous-intensity activity each day, with vigorous-intensity activity at least 3 days each week.

And everyone should spend less time sitting in front of the television, computer, or video game console. There is growing evidence that time spent sitting, no matter how much exercise you get, increases your risks of obesity, diabetes, cardiovascular disease, and cancer, and shortens your lifespan.



[CLICK HERE](#) to read more from our nutritional expert about coffee and cancer.



[CLICK HERE](#) to read the entire *American Cancer Society Guidelines on Nutrition and Physical Activity for Cancer Prevention*.

## Caesar Salad

### Croutons and salad:

8 1-ounce slices French bread, cut into 3/4-inch cubes

16 cups torn Romaine lettuce, washed and dried

### Dressing:

1/2 cup grated Parmesan cheese

1/2 cup fat-free mayonnaise

1/2 cup water

1/4 cup fresh lemon juice

1 teaspoon anchovy paste

1 teaspoon Worcestershire sauce

1/2 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper

1/4 teaspoon dry mustard

4 garlic cloves, minced

To Prepare Croutons: Preheat oven to 300° F. Spread bread cubes evenly on a cookie sheet. Bake for 15 minutes or until lightly browned. Cool.

To Prepare Dressing: While the croutons are baking, combine dressing ingredients and whisk until thoroughly blended.

To Prepare Salad: Place lettuce in large bowl. Add croutons. Add dressing and toss to coat.

Serve immediately.

Serves 8.

Approximately 142 calories and 2.4 grams of fat per serving.



**CLICK HERE** to order this and other great books from the American Cancer Society bookstore.

## Lettuce: Beyond Iceberg

Pale green iceberg is the lettuce of choice for many Americans. But in general, the darker the green, the more nutritious the leaf. Replacing the iceberg in your salad with Boston, red leaf, romaine, or another dark green variety can be an easy way to add more vitamins and nutrients to your diet.

There are four main types of lettuce.

### Crisphead

The least nutritious of the salad greens, this pale lettuce has tightly packed leaves and is shaped like cabbage. An example

is iceberg. It's known for its crispness and mild flavor.

### Butterhead

This lettuce has loose heads, grassy green leaves, butter texture, and mild flavor. Good examples are Boston lettuce, which looks like a blooming rose, and Bibb lettuce, which has a small cup shape.

### Looseleaf

The leaves in this variety are joined at the stem and don't form heads. Examples include oak leaf, red leaf, and green leaf.

### Romaine

This lettuce has a loaf-like shape with darker outer leaves. Its crispy texture makes it a favorite among iceberg fans. It's also the key ingredient in Caesar salad.

An Italian chef named Caesar Cardini, who owned a restaurant in Tijuana, Mexico, created the Caesar salad in 1924. It is said that the original dressing did not contain eggs or anchovies. Try our low-fat version from the American Cancer Society cookbook, *Celebrate! Healthy Entertaining for Any Occasion*.

**In the Next Issue:** • Your Guide to Cervical Cancer • Texts Help Teens Quit Smoking • Healthier Memorial Day Cookouts

Articles contributed by Stacy Simon and Becky Slemons.

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