

## Screenings for every stage of life



Cancer has impacted many of our lives, directly or indirectly. And no matter what season of life you are in, regular screenings are key to prevention and early detection. The American Cancer Society guidelines are as follows:

	Cervical cancer	Colon cancer	Breast cancer	Prostate cancer	Lung cancer
In your 20s & 30s	Get a primary HPV test every 5 years, or if that is not available, a Pap test every 3 years, to be screened for cervical cancer. Follow these recommendations even if you've had the HPV vaccine.	Find out if your risk is higher than average, and if it is, talk to your healthcare provider about when to start screening.	If you have glandular breast tissue, do a monthly self-exam so you are familiar with how your chest looks and feels.	No testing needed.	No testing needed.
In your 40s	Follow the same recommendations from ages 25 to 65.  Note that if you've had your cervix removed for reasons, not related to cervical cancer or pre-cancer, you no longer need to test.	People with an average risk should start testing at age 45. There are several kinds of tests. Talk to your doctor about what's right for you.	If you have average risk and are 40 to 44, you have the choice to start getting annual mammograms. Starting at age 45, get a mammogram every year. Continue doing monthly self-exams to look for any changes, and report them to your health care provider right away if found.	If you have a prostate and a higher than average risk, talk to your doctor about testing. African American people with a prostate and people with close family members (a father, brother or son) who had prostate cancer before age 65 have a higher risk.	No testing needed.
Ages 50-64	Follow the same recommendations from ages 25 to 65.	Follow the same recommendations from ages 45 to 75.	At ages 50 to 54, continue annual mammograms. At age 55, you can switch to every 2 years, or continue annually. Continue monthly self-exams.	Starting at age 50, all people with a prostate and an average risk should talk to their doctor about screening.	If you smoke or used to smoke and have at least a 20 pack-year history and are age 50 to 80, discuss with your doctor if you should have a yearly low-dose CT scan for lung cancer.
65 and up	No testing is needed if you've had regular cervical cancer testing with normal results during the previous 10 years.	Follow the same recommendations from ages 45 to 75. If you are between 76 to 85, talk to your doctor about whether to continue screening.	A mammogram every 2 years is recommended. Make sure to talk to your doctor about the pros and cons of screening.	Consider your overall health as well as your age when talking to your doctor about prostate cancer screening.	If you smoke or used to smoke and have at least a 20 pack-year history and are age 50 to 80, discuss with your doctor if you should have a yearly low-dose CT scan for lung cancer.

Learn more: [cancer.org/cancer/screening](https://cancer.org/cancer/screening)

### Screenings at home

You can help prevent and find some kinds of cancer early by performing self-exams at home and being familiar with what's normal for your body. Look for changes in three major areas:

- **Breasts:** All adults with glandular breast tissue should be familiar with how their breasts look and feel. Regular self-exams can help you keep track of what's normal for you.

- **Skin:** All people should regularly do skin self-exams. Look for irregular shaped or asymmetric moles, or any moles that have grown or changed recently.
- **Testes:** Teens and adults with testes should also do a monthly self-exam. The best time to do it is after a bath or shower, when the skin is relaxed.

If you discover any changes, report them to your health care provider right away.

## Working toward your best health

Equally important to getting preventive screenings are 1) knowing your risk of developing cancer and 2) creating a healthy lifestyle.

### Reduce your risk

The best way to reduce your risk is to understand it. When you know your risk level, you know when to take action. Cancer has many of the same risk factors as heart disease. You are at increased risk if you:

- Smoke
- Have unhealthy eating behaviors
- Lack regular physical activity in your routine
- Have overweight or obesity
- Have a family history of cancer
- Drink alcohol

Other cancer risk factors include age, racial and ethnic background, genetics (such as BRCA1 and BRCA2 genes linked to breast and ovarian cancer), UV ray exposure, viruses like HPV, Hep B and Hep C and HIV, and exposure to carcinogens and air pollution.

Always be sure to talk to your health care provider about your specific risk levels for cancer and when to get screened.

### Lean into lifestyle changes

The good news is you can make lifestyle changes to reduce or eliminate many of the risk factors. The American Cancer Society (ACS) recommends:

- **Get regular physical activity.** It can be moderate to vigorous intensity, with at least 75 minutes of vigorous activity or 150 minutes of moderate each week. Limit the amount of time you spend sitting, lying down (outside of sleeping), and on screen-based entertainment. If you sit most of the workday, make sure to take regular stretch and movement breaks.
- **Eat a healthy diet.** Get more colorful nutrient-rich foods like vegetables, fruits, whole grains, beans and other plant foods that contain vitamins, minerals and phytochemicals that can help lower your risk of developing cancer. Limit processed meat, red meat, sugar and sugar-sweetened drinks, and highly processed foods.
- **Choose not to drink alcohol or limit your consumption.** The ACS advises no more than one drink a day for women and no more than two drinks a day for men.
- **Be safe in the sun.** Stay in the shade, especially in mid-day. Wear sunscreen and protective clothing and accessories when you do go out and enjoy the sun. Make sure to choose sunglasses that block UV rays.
- **Make a plan to quit smoking.** The benefits to your health start just 20 minutes after your last cigarette, with a drop in blood pressure and heart rate, and continue as time goes on. By five to 10 years after quitting, your risk of cancers of the mouth and throat drops to half. By 10 years, your risk of lung, bladder, esophagus and kidney cancer goes down. Your risk of heart disease drops as well.

Learn more: [cancer.org/cancer/risk-prevention/diet-physical-activity](https://www.cancer.org/cancer/risk-prevention/diet-physical-activity) and [cancer.org/cancer/risk-prevention/sun-and-uv](https://www.cancer.org/cancer/risk-prevention/sun-and-uv)

If you had any changes to your health, vision or dental insurance this year, check to make sure your providers are in network before you seek care. This will help you estimate your health costs for the year.

## ONE-POT LENTIL & VEGETABLE SOUP WITH PARMESAN



For an easy meal that's filling and flavorful, try this lentil and veggie soup! **Makes 6 servings.**

### Ingredients:

- 2 tbsp extra-virgin olive oil
- 3 cups fresh or frozen chopped onion, carrot and celery mix
- 4 cloves garlic, chopped
- 4 cups low-sodium vegetable or chicken broth
- 1 ½ cups green or brown lentils
- 1 (15-ounce) can unsalted diced tomatoes, undrained
- 2 tsp finely chopped fresh thyme
- ½ tsp salt
- ½ tsp ground pepper
- ½ tsp crushed red pepper
- ½ cup grated parmesan cheese
- Parmesan rind (optional)
- 3 cups packed roughly chopped lacinato kale
- 1 ½ tbsp red-wine vinegar
- Chopped fresh flat-leaf parsley for garnish

### Directions:

Before you begin, wash your hands.

1. Heat oil in a large pot over medium heat. Add onion, carrot and celery mix; cook, stirring occasionally, until softened, 6 to 10 minutes. Add garlic; cook, stirring often, until fragrant, about 30 seconds.
2. Stir in broth, lentils, tomatoes, thyme, salt, pepper, crushed red pepper and parmesan rind, if using. Bring to a boil over medium-high heat.
3. Reduce heat to medium-low; cover and cook, stirring occasionally, until the lentils are almost tender, 15 to 25 minutes, adding water as needed to thin to desired consistency.
4. Stir in kale. Cook, covered, until the kale is tender, 5 to 10 minutes.
5. Remove and discard the parmesan rind, if using. Stir in vinegar.
6. Divide the soup among 6 bowls; sprinkle with parmesan. Garnish with parsley, if desired.

Refrigerate for up to 5 days or freeze for up to 2 months.

### NUTRITION INFORMATION

Serving Size: 1 ½ cups

Calories	306
Sodium	446 mg
Fat	7 g
Saturated Fat	2 g
Fiber	9 g
Total Sugar	6 g
Carbohydrates	45 g
Protein	17 g
Vitamin A	630 IU
Potassium	489 mg
Cholesterol	5 mg

# Healthy Heart



**What makes for a heart-healthy life?** The National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute of the NIH says heart-healthy living is about understanding your risk, making healthy choices, and taking steps to reduce the chance you'll get heart disease.

## Learn your risk

Some risk factors, like family history, age and sex can't be changed, but others are in your control. Risk factors that you can take steps to reduce include:

- Having high blood pressure or cholesterol
- Having overweight or obesity
- Smoking
- Unhealthy eating behaviors
- Not getting regular physical activity
- Having prediabetes or diabetes

## SELF-CARE FOR HEART HEALTH

You can also keep your heart healthy by simply taking good care of you! This means making time for things that are both good for you and important to you. To help keep your heart healthy, cook yummy, heart-healthy meals for yourself, go for bike rides or do other physical activities you enjoy, make doctor's appointments you've been putting off, and find healthy ways to manage stress.

Learn more: [nhlbi.nih.gov/resources](https://nhlbi.nih.gov/resources)

## Make healthy choices

Healthy choices support a healthy heart. The NIH advises to:

- Choose heart-healthy foods like vegetables, fruits, whole grains, lean meats, fish, eggs, nuts and seeds.
- Limit sodium, saturated fats, added sugars, and alcohol.
- Aim for a healthy weight, and talk to your healthcare provider about what your BMI means for you.
- Get regular physical activity, including lots of aerobic exercise like brisk walking, running, cycling, and swimming. The more you move the better!
- Manage stress by practicing meditation, yoga, or relaxation techniques.
- Make a plan to quit if you smoke.
- Get good quality sleep.

## Take steps to reduce your risk

In addition to lowering your risk through lifestyle, you can build a heart-healthy partnership with your health care provider. They can do a thorough risk assessment and help you set and reach goals for your heart health.

Learn more: [nhlbi.nih.gov/health/heart-healthy-living](https://nhlbi.nih.gov/health/heart-healthy-living)

# FEBRUARY 2025



## PREVENTIVE HEALTH MONTH

Practicing healthy habits and getting preventive screenings are key to maintaining good health and preventing serious illness. Talk to your health care provider about which preventive screenings you need.

Learn more: [preventcancer.org](https://www.preventcancer.org)

## AMERICAN HEART MONTH

You can support a healthy heart by learning your risk for heart disease, making healthy lifestyle choices, and building strong relationships with your healthcare providers.

Learn more: [nhlbi.nih.gov/health/heart-healthy-living](https://www.nhlbi.nih.gov/health/heart-healthy-living)

## BLACK HISTORY MONTH

Black History Month provides an opportunity to share, celebrate and understand the impact of Black heritage and culture.

Learn more: [africanamericanhistorymonth.gov](https://www.africanamericanhistorymonth.gov)

## WORLD CANCER DAY FEBRUARY 4

World Cancer Day is a global awareness day you can participate in to work toward a world where life-saving cancer treatment and care is equitable to all.

Learn more: [worldcancerday.org/take-action](https://www.worldcancerday.org/take-action)

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9	10	11	12	13	14	15
	President's Day					
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