



IOWA DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH'S

FRESH CONVERSATIONS

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A Healthy Living Newsletter for Seniors

Cancer: Preventable, Not Inevitable

By 2030, an estimated 70 percent of all cancers will occur among adults aged 65 years and older. This is primarily because the number of older adults is growing rapidly in the U.S.—and age is the most important risk factor for cancer overall. So, should we throw up our hands and just accept this trend?

No. While there is no guarantee that you won't get cancer, you can lower your risk. We know tobacco contributes to cancer. A smoker is 25 times more likely to get lung cancer than a nonsmoker, and smoking accounts for about a third of all cancer deaths in the U.S. But smoking is only one part of the prevention story.

Experts estimate that Americans could avoid up to a third of all cancers by eating healthier, eating less and moving more. And one simple, delicious way to eat healthier is to eat one more helping of vegetables. They're packed with nutrition, high in fiber and most are naturally low in calories.

By and large, Americans are ignoring the advice to fill half our plates with fruits and veggies. Fruit intake (minus juice) has been flat over the last couple of decades. We ate more veggies (minus potatoes) in the late 1980s. So, do your part: eat more veggies and push back against cancer!



Cancer is the #1 killer of Americans aged 45 to 84. Healthy eating and being more active can help prevent cancer.

Source: Am J Prev Med. 2014 Mar; 46(3 0 1): S7–15. and National Institutes of Health, National Cancer Institute, Nutrition Action Health Letter May and October 2016



Go to cancer.org to see the American Cancer Society's guidelines for when to get a colonoscopy, mammogram or other screening tests.

The Bottom Line: Healthy Lifestyle Matters

To reduce your risk of cancer:

- Don't use tobacco.
- Lose (or don't gain) excess weight.
- Fill half your plate with veggies or fruit.
- Limit red and processed meat.
- Limit alcohol to 2 servings a day for men and one for women.
- Get 20 to 40 minutes a day of any exercise that gets your heart beating.
- When in the sun, apply "broad spectrum" sunscreen (SPF 30+) every two hours.

Source: "How to Lower Your Risk of Cancer" by Bonnie Liebman, Nutrition Action HealthLetter April 2019

Exercise doesn't have to be complicated. Take a walk outside and enjoy the spring weather.



Can We Talk...About Your Colon?

Colon cancer is a success story! The national death rate from colorectal cancer in 2016 was less than half of what it was in 1970. And screening gets much of the credit for reducing the incidence among people over age 50.



Consider the facts:

- Colon cancer is the second most common cause of cancer deaths in Iowa, but it's also one of the most preventable—if you get screened.
- If you catch colon cancer early, it is treatable 90 percent of the time.
- Seven out of 10 people don't have symptoms.
- There are screening options and different screening time frames.
 - At-home screening tests include FIT (fecal immunochemical tests that need to be done on a yearly basis) and a DNA test (Cologuard®, which is done every 3 years).
 - Tests in a medical clinic include a colonoscopy (every 10 years) or a flexible sigmoidoscopy (every 5 years).
- Begin screening at age 50; however, if you have a personal or family history of colon cancer or precancerous polyps, you should talk to your doctor about getting screened earlier than 50.

The Edible Flower

Cauliflower is actually a large edible flower. The head of the cauliflower, called a "curd," is undeveloped white flower buds. There are many varieties and colors of cauliflower including purple, white, green and orange. Orange cauliflower can taste creamier than the white variety, and purple cauliflower has a sweeter, nuttier flavor.



White is the most common color of cauliflower.

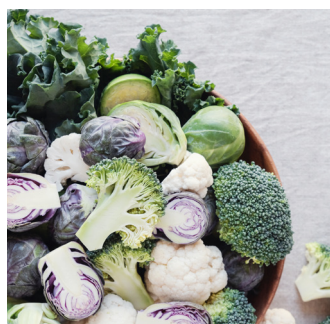


Orange ("Cheddar") cauliflower has extra beta-carotene (vitamin A) in its florets.



Purple cauliflower gets its color from the antioxidant anthocyanin, which is also found in red cabbage.

Cook With Cruciferous Veggies



Cruciferous veggies are special. They're rich in disease-preventing nutrients, including vitamins C, E K; folate, minerals and several carotenoids, including beta-carotene, lutein and zeaxanthin. (Remember those fun words?)

The intense flavor in cruciferous vegetables come from glucosinolates, a large group of sulfur-containing compounds associated with a lower risk of developing several types of cancers.

How many cruciferous veggies can you name? How many do you eat?

Source: *Environmental Nutrition Newsletter*, volume 41, Issue 2, February 2018

collard greens
arugula watercress kohlrabi
turnips bok choy cabbage rutabagas
broccoli cruciferous veggies kale
cauliflower
Brussels sprouts wasabi
radishes

Don't Let Bitterness Get in the Way

Are you turned off by the bitter taste of cruciferous vegetables? Here are some tasty tips.

- Roast veggies to bring out natural sweetness.
- Add a dash of salt to cut the intensity of bitterness.
- Drizzle honey over really strong flavors, like Brussel sprouts.
- Puree leftover veggies like cauliflower and broccoli into cream soups.
- Mash cauliflower and potato together for a tasty side dish.



Testimonial

Marge participates in *Fresh Conversations* in Autumn Heights in Burlington.

Marjorie Marshall (Marge) says the secret to her longevity is "being active." Full of energy, she's frequently seen walking. And at the age of 82, Marge is proud that she only takes one medication.

Autumn Heights, where she participates in *Fresh Conversations*, is one of Marge's favorite volunteer venues. "They miss me if I don't come to lunch," she giggles.

Marge especially enjoys talking about food memories during *Fresh Conversations*.

When asked who she would love to have lunch with she blurted out, "My mother. She was an incredible cook."

Marge fondly remembers the chocolate cake her mother made on each birthday. "It had peanut butter icing, and Mom hid a fifty cent piece in my slice."

That is a sweet memory, indeed.



Crossword Answers (page 4)



Recipe of the Month

Roasted Cauliflower



Treat yourself to this tasty side dish or snack.

Recipe makes 4 servings

Instructions:

1. Trim one small head of cauliflower and cut into florets or 1/4-inch-thick slices.
2. Place cauliflower in a large mixing bowl. Coat with olive oil (a few tablespoons). Season generously with salt and pepper and toss gently until evenly coated.
3. Lay cauliflower pieces out on a baking sheet.
4. Bake at 375 degrees, turning once, until caramelized on edges and tender, 25 to 30 minutes.

Recipe tip: Sprinkle with aged vinegar or parmesan cheese for extra flavor.

Take Action Corner

This month I will...

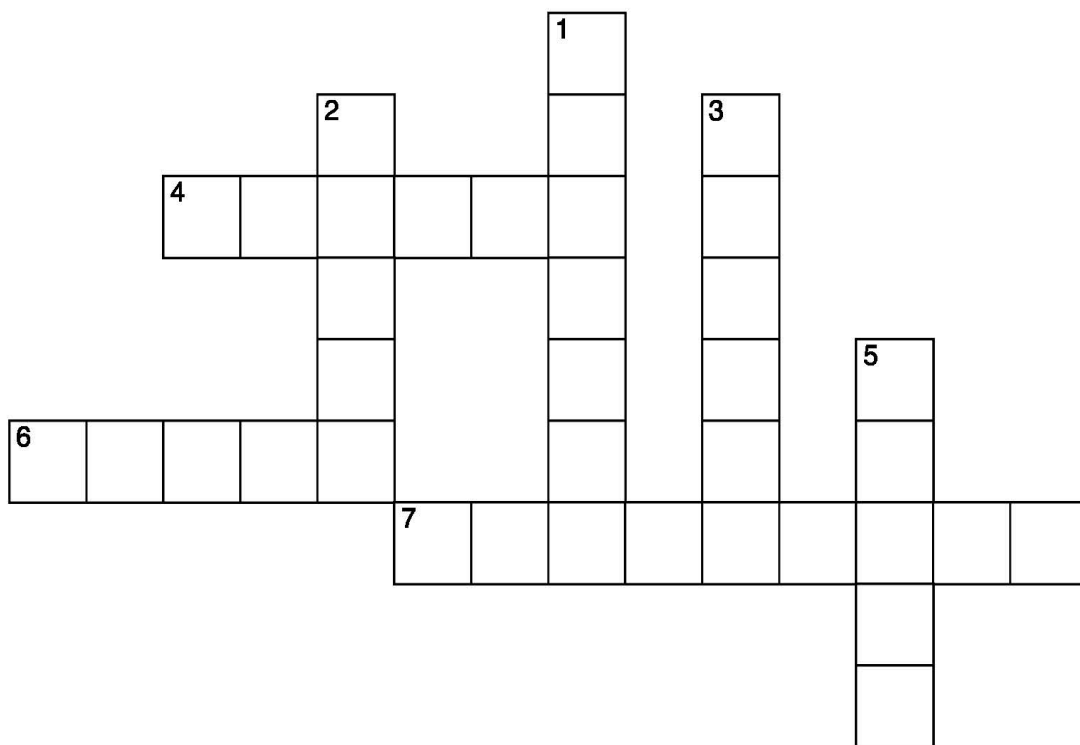
Healthy Life Crossword

ACROSS

4. _____ cauliflower has a milder, sweeter, nuttier taste than white cauliflower.
6. If you catch _____ cancer early, it's 90 percent treatable.
7. Begin colon cancer _____ at age 50.

DOWN

1. This variety of orange cauliflower has 25 times more vitamin A than white cauliflower.
2. Adults should eat 1½ to 2½ cups of dark _____ vegetables a week, including cruciferous veggies
3. _____ cauliflower has a milder, sweeter, creamier taste than white cauliflower.
5. Purple cauliflower is purple on the outside but the inside of the floret is _____.



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