

[IMAGE]

## Year-Round Breast Cancer Prevention

By Editorial Staff

October is Breast Cancer Awareness Month, but that doesn't mean it should be out of the public eye now that November's rolled around. After all, preventing cancer – particularly a cancer that strikes an estimated one in eight women – should be a year-round endeavor. It's also important to recognize that many of the tips to help prevent breast cancer involve healthy lifestyle behaviors. Now that's natural health and wellness with a purpose! Here are five of the best ways to reduce breast cancer risk naturally:

1. *Stay Active:* Exercise not only helps prevent weight gain, which is associated with an increased risk of breast cancer; it also may modify estrogen metabolism in postmenopausal women, reducing cancer risk.

2. *Breastfeed:* Women who breastfeed for six months or longer have a reduced breast cancer risk.

Breast-feeding also benefits the mother and child in numerous ways compared to not breast-feeding.

3. *Say No to Vices:* Alcohol and smoking both increase breast cancer risk, with risk increasing the more alcohol you consume, and any smoking increasing risk (of breast and just about every other cancer). For breast cancer, the risk associated with smoking is particularly impactful in premenopausal women.

4. *Think Natural:* Long-term (more than 3-5 years) use of combination hormone replacement therapy has been associated with an increased risk of breast cancer. Excessive exposure to radiation from imaging studies also may increase risk. That said, don't skip regular self-exams and annual screenings, particularly if you've been identified at high risk due to family history or another variable.

breast cancer - Copyright â Stock Photo / Register Mark 5. You Are What You Eat: A healthy diet high in antioxidants, phytonutrients and other compounds linked to cell health and disease prevention can help you avoid breast and other forms of cancer.

Unfortunately, you can't completely eliminate breast cancer risk, but that doesn't mean you can't take every step possible to reduce your risk. Talk to your doctor about your current health habits and what you can do more (or less) of to help keep breast cancer out of your future.

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