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October Health News

October is Breast Cancer Awareness Month

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What You Can Do to Prevent and Treat Breast Cancer

Living healthily is an important way to prevent breast cancer. But you're still at risk even if you do all the right things. That's why early detection is so important. When cancer is found and treated early, you have a better chance of healing.

Consider these tips for early detection:

- Perform monthly breast self-exams. Check your breasts monthly starting at age 20. Talk with your doctor if you notice any changes. Monthly breast self-examinations are your first line of defense against breast cancer.
- Get regular checkups and screenings as necessary. Mammograms should be done every one to two years for women age 40 or older. Begin at 30 if you're at high risk.



What is a Mammogram?

A mammogram is a low-dose x-ray exam of the breasts to look for changes that are not normal. The results are recorded on x-ray film or directly into a computer for a doctor to examine.

A mammogram allows the doctor to have a closer look for changes in breast tissue that cannot be felt during a breast exam. It is used for women who have no breast complaints and for women who have breast symptoms, such as a change in the shape or size of a breast, a lump, nipple discharge, or pain. Breast changes occur in almost all women. Most of these changes are not cancer, but only a doctor can know for sure. Like any test, mammograms have both benefits and limitations. For example, some cancers can't be found by a mammogram, but they may be found in a clinical breast exam.

A digital mammogram also uses x-rays to produce an image of the breast, but instead of storing the image directly on film, the image is stored directly on a computer. The recorded image can be magnified for the doctor to take a closer look.

Tips to help prevent breast cancer:

- **Develop healthy habits.** Limit alcohol. Eat low-fat foods and lots of fruits and vegetables. Try to stay close to the weight your doctor says is right for you. Exercise regularly.
- **Stop smoking.** When it comes to cancer, tobacco remains the single biggest risk. Smoking is responsible for at least a third of cancer deaths, according to the American Cancer Society.
- **Breastfeed.** If you plan to have a baby, breastfeeding can help lower the risk of breast cancer.

If you are diagnosed with breast cancer, your doctor will likely recommend a combination of treatments depending on the type of cancer, the stage of the cancer and your overall health. Common ways of treating breast cancer include surgery, radiation therapy, chemotherapy, hormone therapy and immunotherapy.



How You Can Help in the Fight Against Breast Cancer

There are many ways to help in the fight against breast cancer. Here are a few:

- **Join the Breast Cancer 3-Day.** Sponsored by the Susan G. Komen Breast Cancer Foundation, participants walk 60 miles in three days to help raise millions of dollars for breast cancer research and patient support programs.
- **Enter the Komen Race for the Cure.** This is a series of 5K runs/fitness walks throughout the country that raises money and awareness for the fight against breast cancer. It also celebrates breast cancer survivorship and honors those who have died from the disease.
- **Buy breast cancer postage stamps.** The breast cancer research stamp costs a few cents more than a regular stamp and can be used as first class postage within the United States. After the cost of a first-class stamp is deducted, the remaining cents go to breast cancer research. By asking for breast cancer research stamps at your local post office instead of ordinary postage, you will be helping scientists and researchers in their work to identify a cause and cure for this dreaded disease.
- **Donate.** The American Cancer Society (ACS) is one good example. If you want to donate money, be sure that the organization is legitimate. Ask your doctor about any organizations you are considering. Many companies offer matching gift programs to encourage employees to contribute to charitable organizations. Check with your employer. If one isn't established, ask about setting one up. You may be able to donate cars, trucks and other vehicles, which are sold in order to raise money for cancer research.
- **Enter the Relay For Life.** This is an overnight event sponsored by ACS. It celebrates survivors and their loved ones and raises money for research. Teams gather at schools, fairgrounds or parks and take turns walking or running laps. Each team tries to keep at least one team member on the track at all times.

Take Care of Your Mouth for Better Overall Health

Gum disease and your health

When your dentist looks in your mouth, he or she can see more than your teeth and gums. Dentists can see signs of disease in other parts of your body. Did you know that infections in your mouth can cause other health problems? That's why taking care of your mouth and regularly visiting your dentist is so important.



Your dentist may refer to gum disease as "periodontitis." There are possible links between gum disease and other serious illnesses.

These conditions include:

- **Diabetes:** The majority of people with diabetes also have gum disease. Diabetes lowers resistance to infections and delays healing, for example from a cut, sore or infection. As a result, people with poorly controlled diabetes have more dental problems and are more likely to lose teeth. If it is not treated, gum disease can make it hard to control blood sugar levels.
- **Heart disease:** Gum disease is associated with heart disease. Gum disease can cause inflammation (swelling), which is the body's reaction to infection or injury. Inflammation may help cause heart disease. Heart patients with gum disease should treat their gum disease as part of their overall heart health.
- **Respiratory conditions (lung problems):** Gum disease has been associated with lung problems such as chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD). Gum disease bacteria in your lungs can make other breathing conditions like pneumonia (lung infection) worse.
- **Pregnancy complications:** Gum disease in pregnant women is associated with pregnancy complications. It's important to know that receiving care from a dentist is safe during pregnancy. It is important for both the health of the mom and the baby. After delivery, germs in the mouth can be passed on to the baby through shared spoons and kisses. This can lead to early tooth decay in the child.
- **Rheumatoid arthritis (joint swelling):** Patients with rheumatoid arthritis are much more likely to have gum disease. Treating gum disease may bring some relief from arthritis symptoms.

Other health problems your dentist can spot:

- **Risk of stroke:** Dental X-rays can show blockages in the head and neck arteries, which can lead to stroke.
- **Oral cancer:** Dental exams normally include a screening for mouth cancer. Exams can show tumors or sores in the mouth.
- **Eating disorders:** Dentists can spot eating disorders by redness in the mouth and thin tooth enamel.
- **Oral thrush:** Oral thrush is a yeast infection. It leaves a white coating on the tongue and throat.
- **Anemia:** Anemia is a condition in which you don't have enough healthy red blood cells. Signs of anemia include pale gums, a red, burning tongue and irritation at the corners of the mouth.
- **HIV:** HIV is a virus spread through body fluids. Symptoms include mouth sores, patches on the sides of the tongue and a white tongue.

Healthy teeth and gums are linked to better overall health. Brush, floss and visit the dentist regularly. You'll enjoy a healthier mouth. And a healthier mouth plays a role in your overall health!



Better Health with Dr. Oz: Dental Hygiene and Care

Check out the video library on the Better Health with Dr. Oz section of the [uhc.com](http://www.uhc.com) website! In these short videos, best-selling author and host of The Dr. Oz Show, Dr. Mehmet Oz, provides practical, easy-to-follow advice on a variety of health topics. To view the program click here: <http://www.uhc.com/health-and-wellness/better-health-with-dr-oz>

Source4Women Online Seminar

Learning from Losers:

Secrets for Long-Term Successful Weight Control

Kathleen Zelman, MPH, RD

October 13, 2015 – 12:30 p.m. ET, 11:30 a.m. CT, 10:30 a.m. MT, 9:30 a.m. PT



Winning at losing: What good is losing weight if you give it a return ticket back? How do some people successfully lose significant amounts of weight and maintain the loss, while others lose and then regain weight in repeating cycles? A research team has studied this question and has shared insights to successful long-term weight loss. For successful, long-term weight loss, you usually have to make permanent changes in your lifestyle and health habits. We will take a close look at the successful losers and the secrets that may help you sustain a lifelong commitment to weight management and improved health.

To register for an upcoming Source4Women online seminar, visit www.source4women.com and click on "Online Seminars & Events." All seminars are recorded and archived for viewing after the live seminar date.

We Dare You!

The month of October has started which means new dares are waiting for you at [http://www.wedareyoutoshare.com/!](http://www.wedareyoutoshare.com/)

- Match the healthy desserts in our Concentration game
- Answer one of our "Preventive Care / Reducing Your Health Risks" questions
- Watch the "Focus on Early Detection during Breast Cancer Awareness Month" video and share your opinion

Complete one or more of these, and you will be entered for a chance to win a \$400 Visa gift card!



October Health Tip

Are you or a family member faced with a diagnosis of cancer?

UnitedHealthcare's **Cancer Resource Services (CRS) program** addresses the many aspects of cancer care and treatment, delivering better outcomes at reduced costs with services such as:

- Specialized clinical consulting to help patients understand diagnosis and treatment options
- Guidance on where to go for care
- Access to clinical expertise and expanded treatment options at CRS Centers of Excellence facilities
- Savings of up to 35-45 percent on treatments delivered at cancer Centers of Excellence facilities

***Check to see if this service is part of your benefits package when faced with a cancer diagnosis.



October Healthy Recipe: Cumin-Spiced Flank Steak with Grape Tomato Salsa

Active Time: 15 minutes

Total Time: 40 minutes

Yield: 4 servings

Ingredients:

1/2 cup couscous
2 small red bell peppers, cut into 2-in. strips
1 small yellow bell pepper, cut into 2-in. strips
2 jalapeño peppers, halved lengthwise (seeded if desired)
1 cup grape tomatoes
1 small yellow onion, cut into 1/2-in. wedges
2 Tbsp. olive oil
Kosher salt and pepper
1 1/2-lb flank steak (about 3/4-in. thick)
2 tsp. ground cumin
1 tsp. chili powder (optional)
1 Tbsp. fresh lime juice, plus wedges for serving



Directions:

1. Heat broiler. Cook the couscous according to package directions.
2. Meanwhile, on a large rimmed baking sheet, toss the peppers, tomatoes, onion, 1 Tbsp. oil and 1/4 tsp. each salt and pepper. Broil, tossing once, until the vegetables are tender and slightly charred, 10 to 12 minutes.
3. Meanwhile, heat the remaining Tbsp. oil in a large skillet over medium heat. Season the steak with the cumin, chili powder (if using), and 1/2 tsp. each salt and pepper, and cook to desired doneness, 5 to 6 minutes per side for medium-rare. Let rest for at least 5 minutes before slicing.
4. Transfer the onions and jalapeños to a cutting board; roughly chop and transfer to a bowl. Add the broiled tomatoes and lime juice and mix to combine. Serve the steak and bell peppers over the couscous and top with the tomato salsa. Serve with lime wedges, if desired.

Nutrition Facts:

Calories: 420
Fat: 15g
Saturated Fat: 5g
Cholesterol: 95mg
Sodium: 443mg
Carbohydrates: 29g
Dietary Fiber: 4g
Protein: 40g

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