

# NUTRITION NEWS

WRITTEN BY: SHANNON DAVIS, RD, CDN

LAYOUT BY: REGINA PIZZO

## Cancer and the Role of Nutrition

APRIL 2025

Did you know that your age is a leading risk factor in your chances of developing cancer? Scientists are not sure why, but aging in and of itself increases an individual's cancer risk.

According to the NIH (National Institute of Health), the chance of developing cancer is ten times more likely for those over the age of 65, compared to those under the age of 65. More than 70% of the mortality associated with many cancers (including prostate, bladder, colon, uterus, pancreas, stomach, rectum, and lung) occur in patients 65 years of age and older. About 60% of the people who are currently suffering from cancers of all different types are over the age of 65.

We have spent a lot of time talking about some of the more prevalent cancers, including breast cancers. Blood cancers (which include leukemia and lymphomas) are on the rise for the elderly but do not seem to generate as much publicity as breast cancer or colon cancer. Did you know that more than 65% of people diagnosed with leukemia are over the age of 55? Did you

know that leukemia affects ten times as many adults as children? Symptoms of leukemia can be easy to overlook because they are often similar to flu symptoms. Some differentiating characteristics of leukemia are possible bone pain or tenderness, swollen lymph nodes, shortness of breath, loss of appetite or weight, and abdominal pain (from an enlarged spleen.)

Leukemia often develops as a secondary cancer from the treatment for another type of cancer. Radiation as well as some of the drugs used in chemotherapy increases the risk of leukemia. Seniors who smoke or who have smoked in the past are also at increased risk because of benzene, a chemical found in cigarette smoke.

Although we have discussed colorectal cancers in the past, there are constantly new developments regarding diagnosis and treatment. It is also one of the cancers that is thought to be heavily linked to nutrition. Lastly, as we age, our risk of being diagnosed with a colorectal can-

### INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

COLORECTAL CANCER	2
INCREASING YOUR FIBER INTAKE	3
MUESLI	4

### MONTHLY EXERCISE

#### NECK STRETCH

These will help in strengthening the upper back and neck  
Stand with feet kept at width of shoulders  
Hands relaxed at side  
Turn head to right slowly without tipping it back or forward stop when a little stretch is felt .  
Hold 15-30 seconds  
Repeat other side

cer increases significantly. All of these reasons make colorectal cancers especially relevant for this newsletter.

Let's start with some updated statistics from 2024. More than one in three adults ages 45 and older are not screened as recommended. More than half of the colorectal cancer cases in the US are due to potentially modifiable risk factors. And up to 30% of people diagnosed with colorectal cancers have a family history of the disease. The risk factors for colorectal cancers remain similar to risk factors for developing other types of cancer: smoking, obesity, sedentary lifestyle, excessive alcohol intakes, and eating a diet devoid of fruits, vegetables, and whole grains.

Early colorectal cancer often has no symptoms, which is why routine screening is so important. As a tumor grows, it may bleed or obstruct the intestine. Because of this, symptoms of more advanced colorectal cancers can include weakness, excessive fatigue, and sometimes shortness of breath. Additional symptoms include bleeding from the rectum, blood in the stool or toilet after having a bowel movement, black or dark stools, a change in bowel habits or a change in the shape of the stool (more narrow than usual), cramping or discomfort in the lower abdomen, an urge to have a bowel movement when the bowel is empty, constipation or diarrhea that lasts for more than a few days, decreased appetite, and an unintentional weight loss.

Treatment for colorectal cancer depends on the stage at diagnosis. Treatments can include surgery, chemotherapy, or a combination of both. Prognosis is also dependent on many factors. According to the Cleveland Clinic, survival rates depend on the stage of the cancer, the number of lymph nodes involved, and whether or not the cancer has spread to other organs. Once again, early de-

tection is key. According to the National Cancer Institute, the survival rate of people with stage I colorectal cancer is about 93%. Conversely, only about 8% of those diagnosed with stage IV cancer are alive five years after diagnosis.

Keep in mind that many of the risk factors that were listed can be controlled through a healthier lifestyle. Quitting smoking, improving the health and quality of your diet, adding regular physical activity, and limiting your alcohol consumption can all improve your chances of developing cancer. Of all these, the single most important risk factor you can control is smoking. Smoking increases your risk of many different types of cancer. If you or someone you know needs help quitting, call the **New York State Smokers' Quit Line at 1-866-NY-QUITS (1-866-697-8487)**.



Adding fiber to your diet may significantly impact your risk of developing certain cancers, but especially your risk of colon cancer. Increased fiber can help regulate your weight, improve your cardiovascular health, lower your risk of developing diabetes, and regulating your bowels.

Fiber is found mainly in fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and legumes (beans and peas). Dietary fiber includes the parts of plants that your body cannot digest or absorb. Because fiber is not digestible, it generally passes relatively intact through your stomach, small intestine, and colon. Fiber is commonly classified as soluble vs insoluble. Soluble fiber is the type of fiber that can be dissolved in water. It can help lower blood glucose and blood cholesterol. Soluble fiber is found in oats, peas, beans, apples, citrus fruits, carrots, barley, and psyllium.

Insoluble fiber is the type of fiber that promotes movement through the GI tract. It increases the bulk of the stool so it helps with constipation. Good sources of insoluble fiber include whole wheat flour, wheat bran, nuts, beans, and vegetables such as cauliflower, green beans, and potatoes. Eating a wide variety of high fiber foods can help ensure that you get a sufficient amount of both soluble and insoluble fiber.

Most people should aim to get 30 grams of fiber daily. Keep in mind that, in general, the more processed a food is, the less fiber it contains. That is why fresh fruits and vegetables are at the top of the list.

Remember that when adding more fiber to your diet, it is imperative that you also consume adequate fluids. Without enough water to keep the fiber moving through your digestive system, it will have the opposite effect and may actually cause constipation.

Here is a list of some high fiber foods and the amount of fiber they contain.

Raspberries (1 cup)	8 g
Pear (with skin)	5.5 g
Apple with skin (1 med)	4.4 g
Banana (1 med)	3.1 g
Raisins (about 60)	1.0 g
Whole wheat spaghetti (1 cup)	6.3 g
Bran flakes (3/4 cup)	5.5 g
Oat Bran Muffin(1 med)	5.2 g
Oatmeal– instant (1 cup)	4.0 g
Bread, rye (1 slice)	1.9 g
Lentils (1 cup)	16 g
Lima beans (1 cup)	13 g
Baked Beans (1 cup)	10 g
Almonds (23)	3.5 g
Artichoke (1 med)	10 g
Green peas (1 cup)	8.8g
Broccoli (1 cup)	5.1g
Baked potato (1 sm)	2.9g

Adding fiber to your diet by trying out new recipes is a is a great place to start!







The Office of the Aging, Youth Bureau and Working Solutions of Herkimer County are recruiting volunteers to participate in the 2025 Intergenerational Clean Up that will support older adults residing in Herkimer, Little Falls, Mohawk, Ilion, Frankfort, Dolgeville and Middleville.

**DATE:** Saturday, May 3, 2025      Rain Date: Saturday, May 10, 2025

**DESCRIPTION:** Light Yard Work including raking leaves, removing green waste, and placing them at the curb

**TIME:** 9:00am – 3:00pm (time may vary based on assignments)

*Light refreshments will be served*

If you're interested in **VOLUNTEERING** or want to learn more about the event call

Kelly Heansel – 315-867-1371

Gina Pizzo – 315-867-1421



## HEAP

**Spring is a great time for  
Clean and Tune on your furnace!**

**HEAP** offers the  
Clean and Tune Program  
Furnace Repair and  
Replacement Program

**Call the Heap Office**

**315-867-1195**



**109 Mary Street, Suite 1101  
Herkimer, NY 13350**

**Phone: 315-867-1195  
Fax: 315-867-1448**

**E-mail: [hcofa@herkimercountyny.gov](mailto:hcofa@herkimercountyny.gov)  
Web: [www.herkimercountyny.gov](http://www.herkimercountyny.gov)**

**Follow us on Facebook !**

## Homemade Muesli

4 1/2 cups rolled oats  
1 cup raisins  
1/2 cup toasted wheat germ  
1/2 cup wheat bran  
1/2 cup oat bran  
1/2 cup chopped walnuts  
1/4 cup packed brown sugar, or to taste  
1/4 cup raw sunflower seeds

Combine oats, raisins, wheat germ, wheat bran, oat bran, walnuts, brown sugar, and sunflower seeds in a large bowl; mix well. Store at room temperature for up to 2 months.

## Low Fat Blueberry Bran Muffins

1 1/2 cups wheat bran  
1 cup nonfat milk  
1/2 cup unsweetened applesauce  
1 egg  
2/3 cup brown sugar  
1/2 tsp vanilla extract  
1/2 cup all-purpose flour  
1/2 cup whole wheat flour  
1 tsp baking soda  
1 tsp baking powder  
1/2 tsp salt  
1 cup blueberries

Preheat oven to 375 degrees F. Grease muffin cups or use liners. Mix together wheat bran and milk, and let stand for 10 minutes.

In large bowl, mix together applesauce, egg, brown sugar, and vanilla. Beat n bran mixture. Sift together flour, soda, powder, and salt. Stir into bran mixture until just blended. Fold in blueberries. Scoop into muffin cups. Bake in preheated oven for 15 to 20 minutes or until tops spring back when lightly tapped.