

HERKIMER COUNTY OFFICE FOR THE AGING

NUTRITION NEWS

WRITTEN BY: SHANNON DAVIS, RD, CDN

LAYOUT BY: GINA PIZZO

Breast Cancer Awareness Month

OCTOBER 2026

October is Breast Cancer Awareness Month. Here are some sobering facts about breast cancer:

- * After skin cancer, breast cancer is the most common cancer diagnosed in women in the United States.
- * Breast cancer can occur in both men and women.
- * In the U.S., one in eight women will be diagnosed with breast cancer in their lifetime.
- * Breast cancer is the second leading cause of death among women in the U.S.

Through the past few years, research funding for breast cancer has been substantial and has contributed to advances in the treatment of this disease. Survival rates are increasing and deaths are declining, due in part to early detection, more personalized treatment plans, and an overall better understanding of the disease process.



While breast cancer can affect anyone, there are certain risk factors that may increase your chances of developing the disease. Having one or more of the following does not mean that you will get breast cancer; but the following list is associated with an increased risk of getting the disease.

- Being female
- Increased age
- Personal history of breasts cancer
- Family history of breast cancer
- Inherited genes that increase cancer risk
- Radiation exposure
- Obesity
- Beginning your period at a younger age
- Beginning menopause at an older age
- Having never been pregnant

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

DIET AND BREAST CANCER	2
COLON CANCER	3
PUMPKIN BARS	4

MONSTER MARCH

Stand with your feet hip-width apart, knees slightly bent, Keeping your hips level, lift one knee after the other to march in place. Start with 30 seconds and work your way up to one minute.

Obesity was listed on the previous page as a risk factor for breast cancer. Being obese can actually increase your risk of developing a number of different cancers. Specifically, consuming a diet high in fat can increase your risk of developing certain cancers.

A healthy diet should consist of no more than 30% of your daily calories coming from fats. But what does this actually mean when reading food labels? If you are consuming 2000 calories a day (which is fairly typical intake for the average adult), no more than 600 of those calories should come from fats. This roughly translates to consuming between 65 and 70 grams of fat per day.

In addition to decreasing your fat intake, adding fruits and vegetables can also be beneficial. As we have discussed in the past, fruits and vegetables are great sources of antioxidants, which can play a role in the prevention of certain types of cancer. They also provide additional fiber.

If you or a loved one are actively going through treatment for breast cancer (or any other cancer), you may find it difficult to consume adequate calories and protein. There are a few tips to keep in mind to help maintain a good weight and promote a strong immune system.

- ♦ If large meals are overwhelming, try to consume 6 smaller meals throughout the day. You may actually be sneaking in some additional calories and protein by doing this.
- ♦ Try adding one supplement daily. This does not have to be Ensure or Boost. You can use Carnation Instant Breakfast made with whole or 2% milk or even a homemade milkshake. Do not replace a meal with the supplement. Try to use it in addition to your regular meal consumption.

Try making it in the morning and then sipping on it throughout the day.

- ♦ Make sure you are drinking enough.. Although you may feel like it is difficult to force yourself to drink, it is easy to become dehydrated during treatment, especially if diarrhea is a side effect. Allowing yourself to become dehydrated can make you nauseous, which sets up a vicious cycle of poor eating, drinking, and malaise.
- ♦ When you do eat, try to consume nutrient dense foods. This means consuming foods that have lots of nutrition in a small amount. Items such as eggs, peanut butter, cottage cheese, yogurt, and even ice cream can give you significant amounts of calories, protein, and fat in just a small serving.
- ♦ Remember that your physician can prescribe medications that may help with your symptoms and with stimulating your appetite. There are a number of different medications that can combat nausea. And if you still have a sluggish appetite, there are appetite stimulants that may be beneficial.

Most cancer centers now have a registered dietitian as part of their treatment team. Do not be afraid to request an appointment. Being prepared for some of the side effects of treatment can be helpful in minimizing their effects on your well being.



Colon Cancer

Breast cancer is not the only cancer where early screening and diagnosis is important. Colon cancer is another example where early detection is key.

Colon and colorectal cancer most often begin as small, noncancerous cells which clump together to form polyps. Polyps may be small and often produce no symptoms. This is why regular screenings, such as regular colonoscopies are so important in diagnosing colorectal cancers in the early stages. If the cancer is more advanced, you may begin to experience some symptoms. These include a change in bowel habits, rectal bleeding or blood in your stool, persistent abdominal discomfort, a feeling that your bowel doesn't empty completely, weakness or fatigue, or unexplained weight loss.

As with other cancers, there are certain lifestyle and/or health conditions that may increase your risk of getting colon or colorectal cancer. These include the following:

- ♦ Older age
- ♦ African-American race
- ♦ A personal history of colorectal cancer or polyps
- ♦ Inflammatory intestinal conditions
- ♦ Inherited syndromes that increase cancer risk
- ♦ Family history of colon cancer and colon polyps
- ♦ Low fiber, high fat diet
- ♦ A sedentary lifestyle
- ♦ Diabetes
- ♦ Obesity
- ♦ Alcohol

The American Cancer Society recommends the following regarding a healthy diet and cancer prevention.

- ♦ Choose appropriate portion sizes of whatever food you eat.
- ♦ Limit your intake of sugar sweetened beverages.
- ♦ Limit your intake of processed meats, including bacon, sausage, lunch meats, and hot dogs.
- ♦ Choose fish and poultry instead of red meat.
- ♦ When using red meat, choose lean cuts and eat smaller portions.
- ♦ Prepare meat, poultry, and fish by baking, broiling, or poaching. Avoid frying and charbroiling.
- ♦ Eat at least 2 1/2 cups of fruits and vegetables every day.
- ♦ Limit your use of creamy sauces, dressings, and dips with fruits and vegetables.
- ♦ Choose whole grains instead of refined grain products.
- ♦ If you drink alcohol, limit the amount.

Maintaining a healthy weight is just one lifestyle change you can make. Limit your alcohol intake, avoid exposure to environmental toxins, and quitting smoking if you do smoke also play a large role in the development of different cancers.



Financial Education with the Herkimer County Office for the Aging and M&T Bank

Topics covered: Credit Scores & Reports,
Identity Theft

When: Tuesday, October 20, 2026

Time: 12—2pm

**Where: German Flatts Community Center
555 St Rt. 5S, Mohawk**

Light lunch will be provided

REGISTER TODAY 315-867-1371

HEAP

November 2, 2026—April 16, 2027

<u>Household Size</u>	<u>Gross Income</u>
1	\$3,563
2	\$4,659
3	\$5,756

Call the **HEAP** office at **315-867-1195** for
an application if you have not received one
in the mail and would like to apply for
HEAP



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

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

**E-mail: hcofa@herkimercountyny.gov
Web: www.herkimercountyny.gov**

Now that fall is here, it is a great time to start experimenting with some new recipes. Apples, pumpkins, and squashes are abundant and can be incorporated into lots of different recipes. This is one of my favorites!

Pumpkin Bars with Cream Cheese Frosting

4 eggs

1 2/3 cup white sugar

1 cup vegetable oil

1 (15 ounce) can pumpkin puree

2 cups flour

2 tsp baking powder

1 tsp salt

1 tsp baking soda

2 tsp ground cinnamon

6 ounces cream cheese

6 tbs butter, softened

3 cups confectioners' sugar

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Grease and flour one 9x 13 inch pan. Beat together the eggs, sugar, oi, and pumpkin, Sift together the flour, baking powder, salt, baking soda, and cinnamon; add to wet ingredients and mix thoroughly. Spread into prepared pan. Bake at 350 degrees for 25-30 minutes. Remove from oven and allow to cool.

Prepare the frosting by beating together the cream cheese, butter, and confectioners' sugar. Evenly spread over cooled bars.

Pair with a cup of tea for an afternoon or evening snack. Enjoy!