

At Fifty Plus

A Newsletter Promoting Fifty-Plus Health from the Anne Arundel County Department of Health • 7th Edition



Colorectal Cancer Screenings Save Lives

LifeScreen Offers Free Screenings

After lung cancer, colorectal cancer is the second leading cause of cancer deaths in the United States. Affecting the colon (large intestine) or rectum, the disease often has no symptoms until it is far advanced. Getting screened to detect it in its early, treatable stage is a matter of life and death.

Your risk for colorectal cancer is higher after age 50 or if you have a family history of the disease. Some lifestyle factors, such as being overweight and eating a high-fat diet, also increase your risk.

The Anne Arundel County Department of Health recommends that everyone age 50 or older be screened for colorectal cancer. An eligible Anne Arundel County resident can receive a free colonoscopy, the most thorough type of screening, through the LifeScreen Program.

Learn To Live also offers a free Colorectal Cancer Information Kit that explains colorectal cancer screening, risk factors, symptoms and prevention. To learn more about colorectal cancer, the LifeScreen Program or to order a kit, call the Learn To Live Line, 410-222-7979, or go to LearnToLiveHealthy.org. Click on "Cancer Prevention," then select "Colorectal Cancer."

Small Steps to Becoming More Active

We all need to bring more physical activity into our lives. The best way to become more active is by taking small steps each day until it becomes a routine. Here are some easy ways to fit more activity into your schedule:

- ▶ **Walk 30 minutes each day.** You don't have to do all 30 minutes at once. Ten minutes here and there will be just as beneficial. Try parking your car farther from buildings so you have to walk a little bit more, or walk the short distances that you would normally drive.
- ▶ **Stretch your body.** Each morning when you wake up, at night before bed, and after any exercise, stretch your body for a few minutes. Just reach your arms up like you're trying to touch the ceiling and hold it for 20-30 seconds. Then bend over like you're going to touch your toes and hold it for 20-30 seconds.
- ▶ **Do light exercises while you watch TV.** You can use light weights or even full soup cans to lift while you watch television. Do it during commercials so you don't miss anything. Also, try sit-ups.
- ▶ **Take the stairs.** Using the stairs instead of riding the elevator will work your lower body and your heart.
- ▶ **Take time to play.** If you have children or pets in your life, play with them. It will be fun, and keeping up with a child or pet is sure to get your heart rate up!

It's always a good idea to talk to your doctor before you begin new physical activities. Once you have the go-ahead, take these small steps to start changing the way you feel. For more help to get active, request a free Fifty-Plus Health Kit by calling the Learn To Live Line at **410-222-7979**. At LearnToLiveHealthy.org you can click on "Free Materials" at the bottom of the page.

Don't Get Burned by Your Medication

Some Can Cause Photosensitivity



Most people understand the importance of protecting their skin from harmful ultraviolet (UV) rays – by using a sunscreen (SPF 15 or higher), and by covering up with a wide-brimmed hat, sunglasses and long sleeves.

What you may not know is that some medications can make your skin more sensitive to the sun. These “photosensitizing” drugs put you at a greater risk for skin problems like sunburns and rashes when you spend time outdoors, any time of the year.

Does your medicine put you at risk? Read the label. If you see photosensitivity among the possible side effects, be extra careful to protect your skin from the sun, especially between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m. when the sun’s rays are the strongest. Also avoid sunlamps as they also cause photosensitivity.

For other drugs and more information, go to the FDA Web site: fda.gov/fdac/features/496_sun.html

Ask your doctor or pharmacist if any of your medications may cause photosensitivity. Be sure to let your doctor know if you experience any problems with a medicine.

For tips on protecting your skin, the Anne Arundel County Department of Health offers a free Sun Smart Kit. Call the Learn To Live Line, **410-222-7979**, or go to **staypretty.org** for more information.

Many common, over-the-counter medications can cause photosensitivity. Here are a few:

Drug Name	Use
Acetaminophen	Pain relief/fever reducer
Diphenhydramine	Antihistamine
Doxycycline	Antibiotic
Estrogen	Oral Contraceptive
Ibuprofen	Pain relief, fever reducer, inflammation reducer

Portion Distortion: Larger Serving Sizes Lead to Weight Gain

Food portions at fast food and other restaurants have gotten larger in recent years. Some portions are referred to as “super size” and may provide enough food for two people. This has contributed to a national obesity problem, with about two thirds of adults being overweight. Do you know how much portions have grown over the past 20 years? Test yourself with this quiz from the National Institutes of Health. It will help you to think about how much you’re eating and whether you need to cut back.

Learn To Live offers a free Healthy Eating Kit with tips for eating sensibly and easy-to-prepare recipes that are delicious and good for you. A “Portion Distortion” handout to help you control serving sizes is also available. Call the Learn To Live Line, 410-222-7979, or go to LearnToLiveHealthy.org. Click on “Food and Fitness.”

1. A bagel 20 years ago was 3 inches in diameter and had 140 calories. *How many calories are in today's bagel?*
A) 350 B) 250 C) 150
2. A cheeseburger 20 years ago had 333 calories. *How many calories are in today's cheeseburger?*
A) 590 B) 620 C) 700
3. A portion of spaghetti with three small meatballs 20 years ago had 500 calories. *How many calories are in today's portion?*
A) 600 B) 800 C) 1,025
4. A regular size soda 20 years ago was 6.5 ounces and had 85 calories. *How many calories are in today's soda?*
A) 200 B) 250 C) 300
5. A portion of French fries 20 years ago was 2.4 ounces and had 210 calories. *How many calories are in today's portion?*
A) 590 B) 610 C) 650

Quiz answers: 1. A. Today's 6-inch bagel has 350 calories. 2. A. Today's fast food cheeseburger has 590 calories. 3. C. Today's portion of spaghetti and meatballs has 2 cups of pasta with sauce and 3 large meatballs: 1,025 calories. 4. B. A 20-ounce soda has 250 calories. 5. B. Today's 6.9-ounce portion of French fries has 610 calories.

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Learn To Live

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