



# Health & Wellness

## **Tobacco Use**

Did you know that female smokers die 12 years earlier than female nonsmokers? Tobacco use dramatically increases your risk of lung cancer and heart disease. Heart disease is the number one cause of death in women. Lung cancer is now causing more deaths in women than either breast cancer or ovarian cancer. If that's not enough motivation to think about quitting, let's not forget that smoking makes you look older by causing more wrinkles and darkening your teeth. There are a lot of great tools to help you stop smoking. There are support groups, nicotine replacement items like gum or patches, and prescription medications to help control your cravings. There is a great hotline that can help you too: **1-800-QUIT-NOW**.

## **Weight Control**

The body mass index (BMI) is a tool often used to measure body fat. A healthy BMI is between 18.5 and 24.9. If you are interested in knowing yours, it can be found on your visit summary. If your BMI is 25 or above, consider weight loss to reduce your risk of high blood pressure, diabetes, heart disease, arthritis and several types of cancer. Losing weight depends on a balance of healthy nutrition choices and exercise. To help limit calories, try to eat fewer foods that are high in carbohydrates/fats. Look for foods that are high in protein instead to help you feel full. As for exercise to create weight loss, we recommend 60-90 minutes of moderate intensity activity that gets your heart rate up at least 4 times per week. For more information on dietary control, you can look at [www.choosemyplate.gov](http://www.choosemyplate.gov). If you are interested in a medically supervised weight loss program with an awesome track record of success, take a look at Christie Clinic's [Transformations](#) Program.

## **Bone Health**

Women have a 5 times higher risk of osteoporosis than men. Once we hit 30 years of age, our bones will start to get thinner and thinner leading to osteoporosis. Worldwide 1 in every 3 women will have a broken bone related to osteoporosis. Even though we can't totally stop our bones from getting thinner, we can slow the process. The American College of Obstetrics and Gynecology (ACOG) recommends 1000mg of calcium per day for women under 50 years of age and 1200mg per day for women over 50 years of age. ACOG also recommends 600 IU per day of vitamin D. It is also important to get 30 minutes of weight bearing exercise at least 3 times per week for bone health. Women over 65 should have a bone density test performed to evaluate for osteoporosis. You can calculate your risk of a broken bone by going to [www.shef.ac.uk/FRAX](http://www.shef.ac.uk/FRAX).

## **Breast Cancer**

Breast cancer affects 1 in every 8 women. Women should understand what their breasts normally look and feel like (breast self-awareness). Then, if a change occurs you can call your healthcare provider. We also perform yearly breast exams on women over the age of 21 to screen for lumps. Women 40 years or older should get yearly mammograms to detect lumps that can be too small to feel. Mammograms are not perfect tests. They can detect about 78% of women who have breast cancer. On the other hand, mammograms can also raise concern for cancer in a woman who has a noncancerous lump: this is called a false positive test. If women get 10 yearly mammograms, the chance of getting a false positive test is 50%. Still the benefits of finding early and treatable cancers outweigh the risks of a false positive test.

## **Colon Cancer**

The estimate for how many people will die each year of colon cancer is about 50,000. To help reduce your risk of getting colon cancer increase the number of fruits, vegetables and whole grains that you eat each day. Also avoid tobacco and excessive alcohol consumption. Sometimes colon cancer can run in families so be sure to tell your healthcare provider about any relatives diagnosed with colon cancer. ACOG recommends screening with colonoscopy starting at age 45 for African Americans and at age 50 for all other ethnicities.

## **Domestic Violence**

One in 3 women are or have been victims of domestic violence. Abuse can take many forms including pushing, hitting, kicking, forced sexual activity, threatening harm, or using degrading/insulting language against another person. No one deserves this treatment, and we encourage you to share what has happened to you with your healthcare provider. We can help you make a safety plan. Our website

[obgyn.christieclinic.com/womens-services](http://obgyn.christieclinic.com/womens-services) lists community resources that offer help in a variety of ways.

## **Safe Sex**

1.4 million people were diagnosed with Chlamydia in the US in 2013. It is very important to try to reduce your risk of a sexually transmitted infection(STI). Not only can these infections cause abnormal discharge, pain and bleeding while you have the infection, but they also can have long term consequences as well. STIs are a cause of chronic pelvic pain which is pain that lasts longer than 6 months at a time. They are also a leading cause of infertility. Use condoms to prevent exposure to a STI with any new intimate partner. Anyone who has had a new intimate partner in the last year should be screened for infection during their annual exam.

## **Healthy Skin**

The best way to take care of your skin is to prevent sun damage. With repeated sun damage, the skin starts to look dry, wrinkled, discolored, and leathery. Although the skin appears to be thicker, it actually has been weakened and, as a result, it will bruise more easily. However, the sun's most serious threat is that it is the major cause of skin cancer, which is now the most common of all cancers with 3-4 million people being diagnosed each year. Most skin cancers can be avoided by preventing sun damage. We recommend wearing sunblock every day and reapplying frequently with heavy sun exposure like during warm weather vacations.

## **Accident Safety**

Here we make some brief recommendations to help you reduce your risk of accidental death.

1. Always, always, always wear your seatbelt.
2. Avoid having your cell phone in your hand for any purpose during driving.
3. Designate a driver when you drink more than 1 alcoholic beverage in the two hours before you will be driving.

## **Preventative Screening**

Remember to see your dentist twice a year and your eye doctor every year to ensure overall good health.