Cancer Survivorship and Healthy Living
Dear cancer survivor,

It’s a well known fact that eating well and staying active can promote your overall health and wellness, but did you know these same changes may also help keep your cancer from returning?

When experts reviewed the available science on diet and survivorship, they concluded that the following dietary guidelines help prevent cancer and may also guard against its return. This is especially important because it is known that a healthy lifestyle can:

• prevent weight gain
• increase your stamina
• boost your immune system
• help control your blood sugar

This booklet provides you with simple tips to help you make healthy choices and set goals to making changes. Information included is adapted from the American Institute of Cancer Research and the American Cancer Society.

If you have any questions about information in this booklet, please contact your healthcare team.

Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions about your nutritional health and wellness, 410-427-5518 or jennifer.williamson@umm.edu.

Sincerely,

Paige Williamson, MS, RD, CNSC, LDN
Weight and Cancer

Research conducted over the last few years has established the importance for cancer survivors to maintain a healthy weight. Several studies have shown a link between being overweight and the increased risk of developing many types of cancer:

- Breast
- Colon and rectum
- Esophagus
- Endometrium (lining of the uterus)
- Kidney
- Pancreas

Further, weight loss has shown to lower the risk of some cancers, including breast cancer after menopause. People who are overweight or obese are encouraged to lose weight to help discourage cancer growth.

How Can I Maintain A Healthy Weight?

You can maintain a healthy weight by balancing the amount of energy (calories) you consume from foods and drinks with the amount of energy you use for physical activity. If you consume more calories than you use in physical activity, this can lead to weight gain over time. To lose this excess weight, you should:

- Reduce the number of calories you consume daily
- Increase your physical activity

What is a Healthy Weight?

A healthy weight is expressed in terms of a body mass index (BMI). This is the measure of your body fat based on your weight in relation to your height. The BMI is a simple tool used to screen for weight categories such as underweight, normal or healthy weight, overweight, and obesity. The BMI also helps determine whether your weight is putting you at an increased risk for health problems like cancer, heart disease, and diabetes.

BMI is calculated by dividing your weight in kilograms by your height in meters squared (BMI = kg/m²). Based on this calculation, BMI can be classified as follows:

- Underweight - BMI range of less than 18.5
- Health weight – BMI range of 18.5 to 24.9
- Overweight – BMI range of 25 to 29.9
- Obese – BMI range of 30 and over
To determine your BMI, use the BMI chart below.

1. Use your finger to find your height on the left-hand column.
2. Once you have found your height, look for the weight closest to your current weight.
3. The top column above your weight is your BMI and the bottom column below your weight is your weight category.

### Body Mass Index Table

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Height (inches)</th>
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<th>Obese</th>
<th>Extreme Obesity</th>
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Physical Activity

Physical Activity and Cancer Risk
Research shows that getting at least 30 minutes of moderate physical activity every day lowers cancer risk.

Physical activity helps to lower cancer risk in several ways
- Regular activity helps keep hormone levels healthy; some hormones can increase cancer risk if their levels get too high.
- Being active may strengthen the immune system.
- Our digestive system benefits from regular exercise, possibly because it helps to prevent constipation.
- Staying physically active can help you avoid weight gain, and that’s important because too much body fat increases the risk for many types of cancer.

Limiting how much time you sit is important for reducing cancer risk
- High amounts of time spent sitting link to overweight and obesity, so breaking up sitting and other sedentary behaviors may help with weight management.
- Some research suggests moving throughout the day, in addition to at least 30 minutes of moderate activity, may also help reduce cancer risk.
- Emerging evidence links more sitting time to larger waist size and high blood sugar, which are markers that may promote several types of cancer.

Getting started - Find an activity you enjoy
- Your activity could be as simple as a daily walk or jog, an exercise video, or a family bike ride. By choosing something you like to do, you’re more likely to keep it up!
- Think about an activity you used to enjoy doing - dance, yoga, tennis or swimming.
- If you want to try something new, like martial arts or dragon boating, find a local class or organization to get started.

Start where you are
- Begin your exercise realistically. If you haven’t run for years, start with a few minutes of light running and alternate with a few minutes of walking.
- Gradually add in more minutes and then make it more intense when you’re ready.
- Keeping track of your progress can be fun and motivational. Try a fitness tracker and share with friends, or keep your own paper and pencil journal.

Sneak it in
- While you’re waiting to meet someone, take a few minutes to walk around the block, or go up and down a few flights of stairs.
- If you ride public transportation, boost steps by getting off one stop sooner or getting on one stop later.
- At your workplace, walking time can add up - use stairs whenever possible, take the long way to the break room or to a meeting.
What Should I Eat?

After cancer treatment, eating a healthy diet and adding physical activity will help you maintain a healthy weight. It may be difficult for you to decide what meal plan is best for you. Consulting with a dietitian may help you develop the best eating plan.

Generally the guidelines for a healthy diet for cancer survivors emphasize:

- Focusing on plant based foods
- Eating at least 2 ½ cups of vegetables and fruits each day
- Choosing whole grains instead of refined grain products
- Limiting how much processed meat and red meat you eat

Plant-Based Foods

Plant based foods are rich in nutrients such as vitamins, minerals, antioxidants, phytochemicals, and fiber. These nutrients are essential to good health. Examples of plant-based foods include:

- Fruits
- Vegetables
- Beans, peas and soy beans
- Whole-grain bread, cereal, rice and pasta
- Olives, nuts and seeds
- Canola oil and olive oil

Fruits and Vegetables

Fruits and vegetables are low in calorie and fat, which makes them a great addition to your healthy eating regimen. Consider making a daily goal to eat about 2 ½ cups vegetables and fruits each day. Adding fruits and vegetables to your diet is also a great way to add color, flavor and texture.

Fruits and vegetables can be eaten raw, grilled, steamed, baked or pureed to make delicious smoothies. Try new fruits and vegetables you have never tried before! Visit your local farmers market or grocery store to choose from a variety of in-season options.
What Counts as a Serving of Fruit or Vegetable?

**FRUITS**
- **One Medium Fruit** = approximate size
- **Fresh, frozen or Canned Fruit** = 1/2 CUP
- **Dried Fruit** = 1/4 CUP
- **Fruit Juice** = 1/2 CUP

**VEGETABLES**
- **Raw Leafy Vegetable** = 1 CUP
- **Fresh, frozen or Canned Vegetable** = 1/2 CUP
- **Vegetable Juice** = 1/2 CUP

**Tips on How to Add More Fruits and Vegetables to Your Diet**
- Add vegetables to your soups and broths.
- Add your favorite vegetables to your omelet. Try adding spinach, tomatoes, broccoli, peppers, or onions.
- At breakfast, add your favorite fruit to your hot or cold cereal, yogurt, pancake or waffle.
- Make half your plate veggies and fruits.
- Have frozen vegetables on hand for stir-fries and side dishes.
- Try adding a fruit to your snack, like banana or apple slices with peanut butter.
Whole Grains

Whole grain products are made with the entire seed of a plant, unlike refined grain products that have been processed to remove parts of the seed (bran and germ). Whole grains are healthier because they provide more fiber and nutrients. The American Institute of Cancer Research (AICR) recommends consuming 30 grams of fiber per day.

Consuming whole grains as part of a healthy may:

• Reduce the risk of heart disease and cancer
• Reduce constipation due to the high fiber content
• Help with weight management
• Help with bone and immune system building

Examples of whole grains include:

• Whole wheat flour
• Bulgur and Buckwheat
• Oatmeal, Whole Oats and Rolled Oats
• Whole Oats
• Whole cornmeal

• Brown rice and Wild Rice
• Quinoa
• Whole grain barley, Corn, Sorghum, Rye and Triticale

To maintain a healthy diet, aim to make at least half your grains whole grains. This means you should try to eat at least 3 servings of whole grains each day. What counts as a serving of whole grain?

• ½ cup cooked brown rice or other cooked grain
• ½ cup cooked 100% whole-grain pasta
• ½ cup cooked hot cereal, such as oatmeal
• 1 ounce uncooked whole grain pasta, brown rice or other grain
• 1 slice 100% whole grain bread
• 1 very small (1 oz.) 100% whole grain muffin
• 1 cup 100% whole grain ready-to-eat cereal

How to Shop for Whole Grain Products

When shopping:

• Check the ingredients list on the food label and only choose products that list whole grain products first.
• Choose wheat products that claim to be made with “100% whole wheat” or 100% whole grain. Bread should provide a minimum of 3 grams of fiber per slice.
• Avoid products that claim to be made with “100% wheat, multi-grain, stone-ground, Bran, cracked wheat or seven grain.
• A brown color does not mean a product is whole grain. Always read the ingredients list on the food label!
• High fiber foods contain more than 5 grams of fiber per serving.

Tips on How to Substitute Whole Grains for Refined Grains

• When shopping for grains, choose whole wheat bread, pasta, macaroni, brown rice and wild rice instead of white bread, rice, pasta or macaroni.
• When making soups and stews add whole grains like barley.
• Add rolled oats to your yogurt.
• Bake your corn bread, corn muffin, and corn cakes using whole corn meal.
• Use rolled oats or unsweetened whole grain cereal when making breading and bread stuffing.
• Substitute whole wheat or oat flour for up to half of the flour in required in recipes for making pancakes, muffins, cookies, and quick breads.

Avoid Processed Meats and Limit Red Meats

What are Processed Meats?
Meat is processed to either to improve taste or extend its shelf life. Research shows that any amount of processed meat eaten regularly, increases the risk of stomach and colorectal cancer. The AICR recommends saving these for special occasions only.

Processed meats are meats preserved by:
• Curing
• Salting
• Fermenting
• Smoking
• Drying

Examples of processed meats include:
• Hot dogs, sausages, salami
• Smoked meat
• Beef jerky
• Bacon, ham
• Salted and cured meat
• Corned beef

What are Red Meats?
Red meats are meats that are red in color when raw. When cooked, red meats change to a dark brown color. Examples of red meats include: beef, pork, lamb and goat.

Although red meats contain high levels of iron, zinc and B complex vitamins, they also have a high fat content which can cause weight gain and heart disease. Several studies have shown an increased risk of colorectal, pancreatic, and prostate cancer. For this reason, if you do eat red meat, choose lean cuts and eat smaller portions.
Tips on How to Limit Your Intake of Processed and Red Meats

- Choose fish, lean poultry and beans in place of beef, pork and lamb.
- Prepare meat by baking, broiling or poaching rather than frying or charbroiling.
- Add soy, beans, or peas as a main dish in place of processed or red meats.
- Try a meatless meal one or two times a week.
- When shopping for meat, choose lean cuts like:
  - Beef: Top sirloin, top loin, chuck shoulder, round steak and roasts
  - Pork: Pork loin, tenderloin, center loin, ham
  - Ground beef: lean ground beef
- Read the nutrition fact label on packaged food to choose products with less fat, trans fat and saturated fat content.
How to Read a Nutrition Facts Label

Start with the Serving Size and Servings per Container
- Compare the amount you actually eat to the serving size listed on the label.
- If you eat more than the serving size listed, you will end up with more calories than listed on the food label.

Amount per Serving Calories
This tells you how many calories are in a serving. On this sample label, a serving size of 2/3 cup contains 230.

% Daily Value
This tells you how much a nutrient in a serving of food contributes to a daily diet, assuming a person is consuming 2,000 calories per day.
- Choose foods with 5% or less daily values for saturated fats, trans fat, cholesterol and sodium.
- Choose whole grain products with higher daily values and less added sugar.
- Choose foods with 20% or more daily values for vitamin D, calcium, iron, and potassium.

Ingredients List
Ingredients lists are displayed in descending order by weight. Those ingredients with the largest weights are listed first. Reading the ingredients lists will help you identify food products that are high in items you want to avoid. For example, if you want to limit your sodium intake, avoid food products that list sodium first on the ingredient list.
Understanding Terms on Packaged Food Labels

Reading packaged food labels is hard to do because the facts are not always clear. Below are examples of some commonly used terms on food labels.

**Calories**
- Calorie free: Less than 5 calories per serving
- Low calorie: 40 calories or less per serving
- Diet: At least 40 percent less calories than a similar food (20 percent less calories if it is a liquid)
- Light or lite: Food has been changed to contain 1/3 fewer calories or ½ of the fat. It can also mean that the sodium content of a low-calorie, low-fat food has been cut by 50 percent.

**Fat and Cholesterol**
- Low fat: 3 grams or less fat per serving
- Fat free: Less than 0.5 grams of fat per serving
- Low saturated fat: 1 gram or less saturated fat per serving
- Saturated fat free: Less than 0.5 grams of saturated fat per serving
- Trans fat free: Less than 0.5 grams of trans fat per serving
- Low cholesterol: 20 milligrams or less cholesterol and 2 grams or less of saturated fat
- Cholesterol free: Less than 2 milligrams of cholesterol per serving and 2 grams or less of saturated fat

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- Trans fat free: Less than 0.5 grams of trans fat per serving
- Low cholesterol: 20 milligrams or less cholesterol and 2 grams or less of saturated fat
- Cholesterol free: Less than 2 milligrams of cholesterol per serving and 2 grams or less of saturated fat
- Percentage (%) fat free: This food is already low fat or fat free. It shows how much fat is in 100 grams of food. For example, if 100 grams of food has 2 grams of fat, then the food is 98 percent fat free. If the food is 75 calories, then the 2 grams of fat adds 18 calories (9 calories per gram of fat) or 24 percent of calories from fat.
- Lean and extra lean: Tells about the fat content of meat, chicken, seafood and game.
  - Extra lean:
    - Less than 5 grams of fat
    - Less than 2 grams of saturated fat
    - Less than 95 milligrams cholesterol
  - Lean:
- Less than 10 grams of fat
- Less than 4 grams of saturated fat
- Less than 95 milligrams of cholesterol per serving

**Fiber**
- High fiber: 5 grams or more fiber per serving
- Good source of fiber: 3 grams or more fiber per serving

**Organic**
All organic foods are approved by national organic standards. The labels are:
- 100 percent organic: Only organic ingredients used
- Organic: At least 95 percent of the ingredients are organically grown
- Made with organic ingredients: At least 70 percent of the ingredients used are organically grown

**Sodium**
- Low sodium: 140 milligrams or less per serving
- Very low in sodium: 35 milligrams or less per serving
- Salt free: Less than 5 milligrams of sodium per serving

**Sugar**
- Sugar free: Less than 0.5 grams of sugar per serving
- No added sugar: No sugar has been added, but there may be natural sugar in the food
- Zero net carbs: Sugar alcohols and fiber have been taken away from the total carbohydrate amount in the food.

**Other**
- Enriched or fortified: Food contains at least 10 percent or more of the daily value of a nutrient than a similar food.
- More: Food has 10 percent or more of the daily value for a nutrient. This is the same for foods that are “fortified,” “enriched” and “added”.
- Good Source of: Food contains 10 to 19 percent of the daily value for a single nutrient.
- High/Rich in/Excellent source of: Foods contains 20 percent or more of the daily value for a single nutrient.
- Healthy: Meets limits on fat, saturated fat and sodium. Contains 480 milligrams or less sodium per serving and has at least 10 percent daily value of one of these nutrients: vitamin A, vitamin C, calcium, iron, protein or fiber.
- Fresh: Never frozen or heated and contains no preservatives. “Fresh frozen” refers to foods that are quickly frozen while still fresh.
- Reduced: Food contains 25 percent less of a nutrient or calories that the regular food; this cannot be claimed if the regular food is already “low” in calories.
Alcohol and Tobacco

Alcohol consumption has been linked to breast cancer and colorectal cancer, but alcohol and the link to cancer risk needs more research. We do know that drinking alcohol and smoking cigarettes adds to cancer risk and that the more alcohol you drink the greater chance you have of getting cancer and other types of disease.

Other disadvantages of drinking alcohol include:

- Alcoholic drinks are high in calories with limited nutritional benefit.
- Excessive alcohol consumption is a leading cause of cirrhosis of the liver
- Obesity
- Heart disease
- Liver cancer and cancers of the gastrointestinal tract, such as cancer of the mouth and esophagus.

What is a serving of alcohol?

If you choose to drink, stick to the recommended limit. The recommended limit for those who choose to consume alcohol is:

- Men – 2 servings of alcohol a day
- Women – 1 serving of alcohol a day

A serving of alcohol is:

- 5 ounces of wine
- 12 ounces of beer
- 1 ½ ounces of liquor

Certain groups of people should not drink alcohol at all. These include children, teens, pregnant women, and women who may become pregnant.

Tobacco

If you currently smoke or use tobacco products, talk to your doctor about ways to quit.
Antioxidants protect cells from damage caused by free radicals. Free radicals are unstable molecules that damage healthy cells, including DNA.

If the DNA of a healthy cell is damaged, it can develop into cancer. Free radicals come from: pollution, radiation, sunlight, cigarette smoke, herbicides, alcohol, aging and injury.

Antioxidants are found naturally in foods from plant sources. Examples of antioxidants are:

- **Vitamin E**: blocks the formation of cancer and may reduce the size of some tumors. Vitamin E is in:
  - Corn, soybean and safflower oil
  - Wheat germ
  - Nuts (sunflower seeds, almonds, peanut butter)
- **Vitamin C**: protects cells from damage by free radicals and works with vitamin E. It may also have a role in immunity, bone and collagen formation and protecting the vascular system. Vitamin C is found in:
  - Kiwi
  - Citrus fruits (oranges, grapefruit, lemons, limes)
  - Strawberries
  - Cantaloupe
  - Broccoli
- **Selenium**: a mineral that helps protect cells from radicals, regulates thyroid function and plays a role in the immune system. Selenium is in:
  - Brazil nuts
  - Beef
  - Seafood
  - Turkey
  - Chicken breast
- **Zinc**: helps in wound healing and improves the sense of taste and smell. Zinc is found in:
  - Oysters
  - Red meat
  - Chicken
  - Beans
  - Nuts
  - Whole grains
  - Fortified foods (like breakfast cereal)
Phytochemicals
Phytochemicals play a vital role in a healthy diet and play a major role in preventing and fighting disease in our bodies. Early research hints that they may offer a frontline defense against cancer.

The best way to include phytochemicals in your diet is to eat plant-based foods. The key is to eat a mix, or rainbow, of colored fruit and vegetables. Choose whole grains, and eat five to nine servings of fruits and vegetables every day.

Supplements: Vitamins, Minerals and Herbs
In most cases, the body is better able to use nutrients from food than from dietary supplements. If you wish to take a supplement, a daily multivitamin is a good choice.

How Do I Choose a Multivitamin?
Choose a multivitamin with 100 percent daily value of the nutrients that are listed on the label. Herbal ingredients may interact with other prescription or over-the-counter medicine. Take multivitamins once a day with food. A multivitamin should not take the place of nutrients found in a healthy, well-balanced diet.

Unlike food, the US government does not review the safety of dietary supplements. This includes vitamins, minerals, and herbal products. Look for the United States Pharmacopeia (USP) and ConsumerLab (CL) seal to indicate approval by an independent third party organization.

Should I take additional vitamins, minerals, antioxidants or herbal products?
In some cases, excess or high doses of some supplements can be harmful. Some supplements may also interfere with prescriptions or over-the-counter medicine.

Talk to your health care team about any dietary supplements you are taking or those you have questions about. If you are taking blood-thinning medicine, oral chemotherapy or immunotherapy, this is especially important.

There is not enough research data to say if herbal supplements are safe or useful. Talk to your health care team before taking these.
What About Soy?

Soy is a plant that is common in the Asian diet. Soy-derived foods include tofu, soy milk, and soy powder to name a few. The controversy surrounding soy is due to one of its phytochemicals, isoflavone, and concern of possible estrogenic effects.

However, it is not necessary for breast cancer survivors to avoid all types of soy foods. Current research indicates that survivors with an estrogen receptor-positive breast cancer can enjoy whole soy foods like soy milk, tofu, edamame, tempeh and soy nuts. According to the American Institute for Cancer Research, moderate consumption of whole soy foods, or 1-2 servings per day, does not increase cancer risk, and may actually lower the risk of cancers of the breast, prostate, and other cancers. One serving is:

- 1 cup of soy milk
- ½ cup of cooked edamame
- ½ cup of cooked soy beans
- 1 ounce of soy nuts

Avoid foods made from soy protein powder, soy protein isolate, or isolated soy protein — less is known about these products. These forms of soy are often found in nutrition bars, soy protein powder, many high protein breads and cereals and vegetarian “meat-less” options, such as certain brands of veggie burgers or soy hot dogs. Be sure to read the ingredient list. Foods with soy in the name that do not have any phytoestrogen activity and are safe to eat include: soybean oil, soy sauce, and foods made with soy lecithin.
Nutrition and Activity Quiz

Are you living smart? Take this American Cancer Society (ACS) Nutrition and Activity quiz to assess how you are currently doing. Then use the information provided in this booklet and by the ACS to incorporate nutrition and physical activity into your daily life.

To use this quiz,
1. Check “Yes” or “No” next to each question.
2. Add up your “Yes” responses.
3. Look up your score in the “Scoring” section.

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<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>Questions</th>
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<td>☐</td>
<td>I eat at least 2½ servings of fruit and vegetables every day.</td>
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<td>☐</td>
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<td>I eat whole-grain bread, pasta, and cereal instead of refined grain products.</td>
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<td>I try to choose foods low in calories and fat.</td>
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<td>I rarely eat processed or red meat like bacon, hot dogs, and sausage.</td>
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<td>I take it easy on pies, cakes, cookies, sweet rolls and doughnuts.</td>
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<td>I rarely add butter, margarine, oil, sour cream or mayonnaise to foods when I’m cooking or at the table.</td>
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<td>I rarely (less than twice a week) eat fried foods.</td>
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<td>I try to maintain a healthy weight.</td>
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<td>I get at least 150 minutes of moderate activity, or 75 minutes of vigorous physical activity weekly.</td>
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<td>I usually take the stairs instead of waiting for an elevator.</td>
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<td>I try to spend most of my free time being active, instead of watching television or sitting at the computer.</td>
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<td>☐</td>
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<td>I never, or only occasionally, drink alcohol.</td>
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American Cancer Society (www.cancer.org)

Scoring Scale

0-4 “Yes” answers
Diet alert! Your diet is probably too high in calories and fat and too low in plant foods like vegetables, fruits, and grains. You may want to take a look at your eating habits and find ways to make some changes.

5-8 “Yes” answers
Not bad! You’re halfway there. You still have a way to go. Look at your “No” answers to help you decide which areas of your diet need to be improved, or whether your physical activity level should be increased.
9-12 “Yes” answers
Good for you! You’re living smart! Keep up the good habits, and keep looking for ways to improve.

Setting Goals
Based on your score on this quiz if you need to make some improvements, the next step is to set goals. Setting goals will help you stay focused. When developing your goals consider setting “SMART goals”.

SMART goals are:
• Specific – simple, sensible and significant. Make your goals clear. Avoid setting vague goals.
• Measureable – attach amounts, dates, or times to your goals so you can measure or track your success. Measuring and tracking your success is also a great motivator.
• Attainable – do not set goals that are impossible for you to achieve. Doing this may demoralize you. Instead start small and work your way up.
• Relevant – only set goals that are reasonable and realistic
• Time Bound – set deadlines for each goal.

Now that you know what type of goals to set, it is a good idea to write down your goals. When writing your goals,
• Use positive statements.
• Write why each goal is valuable and important.
• Develop an action plan to help you achieve your goals.
• Start with no more than three goals.

Once you have written down your goals, post them in a visible place. This will help remind you of what you intend to do. Suggested posing spots include:
• Refrigerator
• Computer screen
• Poster board
• Desk
• Bathroom mirror

Examples of goals
1. “I will add ¼ cup of dried fruit to my cereal every morning to eat more fruit every day”.
2. “I will walk for 30 minutes three times a week after breakfast to increase my physical activity”.

Use the goal setting worksheet on the next page to develop your goals. Remember to talk to your doctor before you begin any exercise regimen.
GOAL SETTING WORKSHEET

The health concerns I want to focus on are:

________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________

Goal 1
________________________________________________________________

Action steps:
1. ______________________________________________________________
2. ______________________________________________________________
3. ______________________________________________________________
Deadline: ___________________________

Goal 2
________________________________________________________________

Action steps:
1. ______________________________________________________________
2. ______________________________________________________________
3. ______________________________________________________________
Deadline: ___________________________
Goal 3

Action steps:

1. 

2. 

3. 

Deadline: ___________________________