

# 10 diet & exercise tips for prostate health

"What can I eat to reduce my risk of developing prostate cancer?" This is one of the most common questions physicians hear from men concerned about prostate health. Undoubtedly, many hope that their doctor will rattle off a list of foods guaranteed to shield them from disease. Although some foods have been linked with reduced risk of prostate cancer, proof that they really work is lacking, at least for now.

## Aim for a healthy eating pattern

Instead of focusing on specific foods, dietitians, physicians, and researchers tout an overall pattern of healthy eating — and healthy eating is easier than you might think. In a nutshell, here is what experts recommend:

1. Eat at least five servings of fruits and vegetables every day. Go for those with deep, bright color.
2. Choose whole-grain bread instead of white bread and choose whole-grain pasta and cereals.
3. Limit your consumption of red meat, including beef, pork, lamb, and goat, and processed meats, such as bologna and hot dogs. Fish, skinless poultry, beans, and eggs are healthier sources of protein.
4. Choose healthful fats, such as olive oil, nuts (almonds, walnuts, pecans), and avocados. Limit saturated fats from dairy and other animal products. Avoid partially hydrogenated fats (trans fats), which are in many fast foods and packaged foods.
5. Avoid sugar-sweetened drinks, such as sodas and many fruit juices. Eat sweets as an occasional treat.
6. Cut down on salt. Choose foods low in sodium by reading and comparing food labels. Limit the use of canned, processed, and frozen foods.
7. Watch portion sizes. Eat slowly and stop eating when you are full.

## Stay active to support prostate health

In addition to eating a healthy diet, you should stay active. Regular exercise pares down your risk of developing some deadly problems, including heart disease, stroke, and certain types of cancer. And although relatively few studies have directly assessed the impact of exercise on prostate health, those that have been done have concluded, for the most part, that exercise is beneficial. For example:

1. Based on questionnaires completed by more than 30,000 men in the Health Professionals Follow-up Study, researchers found an inverse relationship between physical activity and [BPH symptoms](#). Simply put, men who were more physically active were less likely to suffer from BPH. Even low- to moderate-intensity physical activity, such as walking regularly at a moderate pace, yielded benefits.
2. Using data from the Health Professionals Follow-up Study, researchers also examined the relationship between [erectile dysfunction](#) (ED) and exercise. They found that men who ran for an hour and a half or did three hours of rigorous outdoor work per week were 20% less likely to develop ED than those who didn't exercise at all. More physical activity conferred a greater benefit. Interestingly, regardless of the level of exercise, men who were overweight or obese had a greater risk of ED than men with an ideal body mass index, or BMI.
3. Italian researchers randomly assigned 231 sedentary men with [chronic prostatitis](#) to one of two exercise programs for 18 weeks: aerobic exercise, which included brisk walking, or nonaerobic exercise, which included leg lifts, sit-ups, and stretching. Each group exercised three times a week. At the end of the trial, men in both groups felt better, but those in the aerobic exercise group experienced significantly less discomfort, anxiety and depression, and improved quality of life

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