



October 6th, 2014

Is Prevention the Best Medicine? Yes!

Preventing Cancer

It would be easy to blame the growing rate of cancer on our increased life span and improved treatments/cures of previously deadly diseases, but the fact of the matter is that about half of all cancers are preventable! Smoking is the biggest culprit and is estimated to be responsible for about 20 percent of cancer. Cancer is the world leading cause of death and the only way we are going to win that battle is with prevention!

Preventable cancers tend to be caused by one (or more!) of several lifestyle choices: tobacco use, alcohol use, being overweight or obese, and not exercising. Tobacco harm is not restricted to smoking; other forms, such as chewing tobacco, are also damaging. Even low alcohol consumption (1 small drink per day) is associated with risk, and lack of exercise is not only a factor in being overweight (along with diet) but a cancer risk in its own right.

ASA to Prevent Heart Attack

Many people are taking a daily low-dose ASA tablet daily to help prevent a heart attack or stroke, but now a researcher from the Yale School of Public Health may have found that this same daily dose can help reduce the risk of pancreatic cancer. The reduction was about 6 percent for each year of regular ASA use. ASA is not without its own side-effects and this is not considered a reason to start taking it, but it's good to know it's not doing more harm – and may, in fact, be helping.

Latest on Screening Mammography

Mammogram screening has come under scrutiny – with oft-cited risks of radiation exposure and the stress of false positives/negatives. Now, the US Preventive Services Task Force is suggesting another reason for reviewing mammogram use: cost-effectiveness. They suggest that broad-based annual screening from age 40 is unnecessary and a more targeted system will result in substantial health care savings without increased morbidity/mortality.

October is Breast Cancer Awareness month. Get involved in the fight against breast cancer through donation, volunteering, fundraising, or raising awareness. "Support the girls!" Remember to ask your pharmacist about effective preventive measures to keep you healthy.