# LIVE WELL WORK WELL

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Presented by Alamo Insurance Group

## New Breast Cancer Screening Guidelines Released

Last month, the American Cancer Society released new breast cancer screening guidelines recommending that women should wait until age 45 to begin annual mammograms—five years later than previously recommended.

The American Cancer Society now believes that mammograms may do more harm than good before age 45, as younger women may receive “false positive” results and undergo unnecessary follow-up testing.

It is important to remember that this recommendation is not definitive, as other reputable organizations advise different screening guidelines (for example, the U.S. Preventive Services Task Force recommends age 50). To determine what is best for you, talk to your doctor, especially if you have a family history of breast cancer or other risk factors.

## Bacon and Other Processed Meats Increase Risk of Cancer

The World Health Organization (WHO) recently announced that eating bacon, sausages, hot dogs and other processed meats may increase your risk of colorectal cancer.

While the news that processed meats aren’t good for you isn’t exactly groundbreaking, the fact that the WHO classified processed meats as “carcinogenic to humans” **is** news, as this puts processed meats in the same category as common carcinogens like tobacco. The study also says that red meat itself is “probably carcinogenic.”

This includes chicken and turkey sausage, too. The WHO says that processed meats derived from sources like poultry and other meats (veal, lamb, horse, etc.) are also carcinogenic.

However, this doesn’t mean that bacon is as dangerous as smoking. According to the American Institute for Cancer Research, people who eat meat are two times more likely to develop cancer than those who don’t. Smokers, on the other hand, are 20 times more likely to get cancer than nonsmokers.

Furthermore, this news doesn’t mean you have to stop eating the foods you love. Red meat has known health benefits, such as providing your body with iron, zinc and vitamin B. However, moderation is key. The World Cancer Research Fund recommends eating no more than 18 ounces of red meat a week, or about three regular-sized burgers, and very little, if any, processed meats.

Instead, fill your plate with fruits, vegetables, whole grains, legumes, nuts and seeds. High-fiber foods like oatmeal, beans, peas and raspberries can help toxins move through the digestive system quickly (along with providing valuable nutrients)—potentially helping to offset the harmful effects of eating too many processed meats.

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# Avoid Holiday Weight Gain

With all the cookies, eggnog and pecan pie, it's hard to watch your waistline during the holidays. To avoid overindulging this holiday, practice portion control. Try having a healthy snack before heading to parties so you don't arrive hungry. Also, putting your fork down between bites can help you pace yourself.

At buffets, grab the smallest plate and fill it with healthier options like fruits and vegetables. Try to stay away from dips and cheese boards, as these can be high in calories. To ensure a healthy option is available, bring your own low-calorie dish to share. Limiting alcohol will also help reduce your calorie intake and improve your self-control when it comes to how much you eat. Lastly, be very selective about sweets in order to minimize your sugar intake.

# Navigating the Holiday Buffet

Putting on a few pounds over the holidays may not seem like a big deal, but according to the National Institutes of Health, most Americans never lose the holiday weight they gain. Here are some suggestions of what to eat and what to avoid this holiday season:

**Fruit –** 50-110 calories per cup (depending on type of fruit)

**Carrots –** 52 calories per cup

**Hummus –** 140 calories per 1/3 cup

**Fruit cake –** 470 calories per serving

**Eggnog –** 350 calories per cup

**Pecan pie –** 500 calories per slice

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# Cranberry Sweet Potatoes

These sweet potatoes are a healthy substitution for the mashed potatoes typically served during holiday dinners, which are usually loaded with butter, cream and cheese.

- 4 Tbsp. orange juice
- 2 Tbsp. margarine
- 2 Tbsp. vegetable oil
- 2 Tbsp. sugar
- 1 tsp. cinnamon
- ¼ tsp. salt
- 2 lbs. sweet potatoes (peeled and cut into 1-inch pieces)
- ½ cup dried cranberries

Preheat oven to 375 F.

In a 9x9 baking dish, combine the orange juice, margarine, vegetable oil, sugar, cinnamon and salt.

Add the potatoes and cranberries.

Cover with foil and bake for 40 minutes or until potatoes are soft.

Yield: 6 servings. Each serving provides 250 calories, 9 g of fat, 1.5 g of saturated fat, 180 mg of sodium, 2 g of protein and 5 g of fiber.

Source: USDA