

# NEWSLETTER

Amersham Health Centre – February 2025

---



## Fun Health Fact

### The Power of a Walk

Did you know that taking a brisk walk can boost your mood!

Just 30 minutes of walking a day can trigger the release of endorphins, which are natural mood lifters.

A daily walk can help reduce stress, anxiety, improve sleep and can even help overall mental clarity.

The best part? It's accessible to nearly everyone and it can be done nearly anywhere!

## Zainab

**Assistant Practitioner (Currently a student Nurse)**

I've been at Amersham Health Centre for nearly 15 years now and have progressed to where I am today with the support of my colleagues, which I truly appreciate. While I didn't always aspire to be a healthcare professional, somewhere along the way I shifted from Environmental Sciences to Human Sciences, and I'm so glad I made that change. Currently, I'm working towards becoming a Registered Nurse over the next two years, so I may not be around as much at the health centre.

Outside of work, I enjoy hiking. Last July (2024), I trekked to Fairy Meadows in Northern Pakistan, a place named by German climbers. It's located where the Hindu Kush, Karakoram, and Himalayan Mountain ranges meet. The journey included a thrilling jeep ride along dangerous gravel roads, with sheer drop-offs, and led to the Nanga Parbat base camp at an elevation of about 3,800 meters. It was one of the most amazing experiences of my life! I loved it so much that I also completed the Three Peaks Challenge in 5 days.

In addition to hiking, I love baking, crocheting, and I'm very involved in local fundraising efforts for the community when I'm not out on a mountain!



Image by the World Cancer Research Fund

## Can Cancer be Prevented?

One of the problems with cancer is that people often don't think about it until, sadly, they hear the words "you've got cancer". While it's true that cancer is much more common in older people – because our cells deteriorate as we age – prevention can start young. Up to 40% of cancer cases are preventable, if people didn't smoke, avoided the sun, avoided alcohol, ate a healthy diet, maintained a healthy body weight and stayed physically active.

## Exercise Snacking

Exercise snacking focuses on brief, frequent bursts of movement throughout the day instead of dedicating a full hour to the gym or a long run. Even tiny amounts of activity can dramatically reduce cancer risk, which could be a game-changer for people who don't like to exercise! With our fast-paced lifestyles, this approach is gaining popularity since it can be done anywhere—at home, at work, or even in a park. The best part? No need to change your clothes!

## Good News for Chocolate Lovers!

Dark chocolate (70% cocoa or higher) is packed with antioxidants that help protect cells from damage linked to cancer. It also has anti-inflammatory properties, supports heart and gut health, and may even boost the immune system. Just remember to enjoy it in moderation—about an ounce a day—and choose high-quality dark chocolate with minimal sugar for the best benefits!

## It's a Package Deal

The list of cancer prevention recommendations to the right should be seen as a package deal – unfortunately, you can't just pick and choose if you want to reduce your cancer risk. Being very active won't compensate for drinking alcohol, and eating lots of pulses won't make up for drinking lots of sugary drinks! Rather than seeing the recommendations as a checklist, think of them as a way of living. Not only will following them reduce your risk of cancer, but they can also reduce your risk of other diseases as well!

## Cancer Prevention Action Week

Monday 17<sup>th</sup> Feb – Sunday 23<sup>rd</sup> February

Each year, the World Cancer Research Fund holds Cancer Prevention Action Week, which focuses on supporting and empowering the public to make changes to their daily habits, and that of their families, to reduce their risk of preventable cancers.

To find out more about how you can get involved, visit:

<https://www.wcrf.org/preventing-cancer/cancer-prevention-action-week/>

## Cancer Prevention Recommendations

- ❖ Be a healthy weight and physically active
- ❖ Eat wholegrains, vegetables, fruit and beans
- ❖ Limit 'fast foods,' red and processed meat
- ❖ Limit sugar sweetened drinks
- ❖ Limit alcohol consumption
- ❖ Get plenty of safe sunshine
- ❖ For mothers: breastfeed your baby, if you can
- ❖ Not smoking

(Source: The World Cancer Research Fund)