



Cancer CARE for LifeSM
an INTERLINK® Health Company

The Paradox of Prevention: Rethinking Cancer Risk in the Wellness Era

What if the greatest opportunity for cancer prevention isn't among the high-risk but among those who believe they're already doing everything right?

In the modern health landscape, prevention is championed in public campaigns and wellness blogs. We eat clean, track steps, and hit our yoga classes. And for many, that effort builds quiet confidence. But here's the paradox: the people most invested in staying healthy are often the least likely to think they need cancer prevention. They feel good. They look good. They think they're in the clear.

That's not denial, it's psychology. When we feel good, our brains actually downplay our risk for future illness (Weinstein, 1989). The sense of "I feel great" becomes a cognitive barrier to thinking about screening, long-term inflammation, or even family health history.

The Illusion of Health

Cancer can remain silent for years. Many forms including colorectal, breast, skin, and prostate can develop without noticeable symptoms until late stages. Meanwhile, external health behaviors (e.g., regular workouts or a clean diet) can mask internal risk factors like genetics, environmental exposure, and age-related vulnerability.

This creates an illusion: the appearance of health without true health security. What's needed is not just more information but a shift in how we frame cancer prevention.



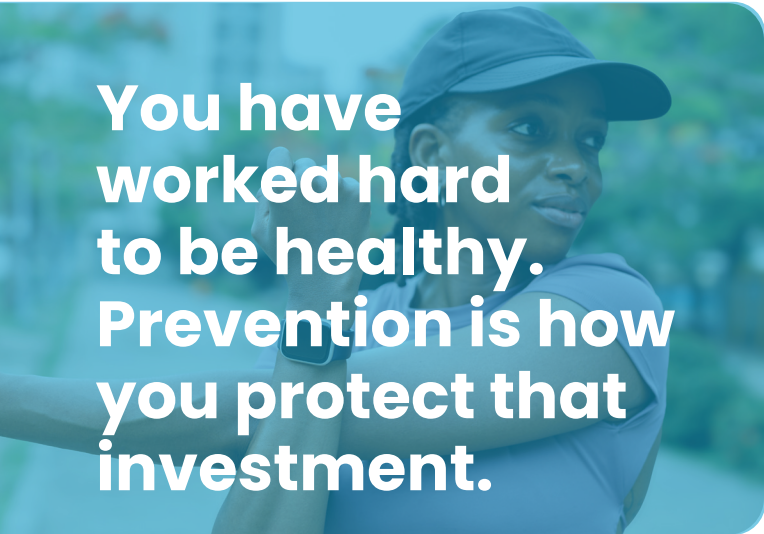
My dad was always active, healthy, and full of energy. So, when he was diagnosed with advanced cancer, it hit him hard.

Looking back, his long stretch of good health actually worked against him—he didn't see the need for preventive care. Feeling well gave him a false sense of security that kept him from seeing the risk.

Reframing Prevention: From Fear to Optimization

Public health messages often lean on fear or guilt, such as "Don't wait until it's too late." But for people who already take their health seriously, that kind of message doesn't land. It feels out of sync with how they see themselves.

Instead, prevention should be framed as a smart, next-level strategy. It is not about fixing a problem; it is about building on the effort they have already made to stay well. When we connect prevention to identity and motivation, it becomes something that feels empowering, not alarming.



**You have
worked hard
to be healthy.
Prevention is how
you protect that
investment.**

The CARE Health Model

To activate cancer prevention among the well, we're developing the CARE Health Model, a proactive framework grounded in medical guidelines, understanding risk, behavioral science, and healthy lifestyle choices. Our goal is to help people stay ahead of disease while staying true to who they are as high-performing individuals.

The **CARE Health Model** supports a clear picture of an individual's strengths and opportunities in cancer prevention. Members complete a brief self-assessment in each domain and receive a personalized CARE Score along with visual feedback highlighting their strengths and areas for improvement across:

CARE HEALTH MODEL

- C** Comprehensive screening
- A** Awareness of family history
- R** Routine movement & nutrition
- E** Environmental exposures

Why This Matters Now

Cancer rates are rising in adults under 50, particularly for colorectal, thyroid, and breast cancers (City of Hope). At the same time, the wellness culture is booming. This is a critical inflection point and an opportunity to align modern prevention with the values of the people who are already trying to stay healthy.

Cancer prevention isn't about waiting for symptoms; it's the next frontier of proactive wellness.



References

1. Weinstein, N.D. (1989). Optimistic biases about personal risks. *Science*, 246(4935), 1232–1233.
2. Ryan, R.M., & Deci, E.L. (2000). Self-determination theory and the facilitation of intrinsic motivation, social development, and well-being. *American Psychologist*, 55(1), 68–78.
3. City of Hope: Why are cancer rates rising in adults under 50?. www.cancercenter.com/community/blog/2023/01/why-are-cancer-rates-rising-in-adults-under-50

