LESSON 2: REDUCE YOUR RISK

Lesson Focus

As a result of the learning activities within this lesson participants will be able to:

- identify lifestyle risk factors that may contribute to breast cancer
- identify individual behavioral strategies that act upon existing knowledge of healthy lifestyle behaviors
- understand that health research is always evolving
- understand strategies to keep oneself informed and up-to-date with new information
- demonstrate the ability to access health services available in the community
- identify breast cancer resources available in their community

Participant Resources

- PR-5 Resource List
- PR-6 Mythbusting Links
- PR-7 Health Links
- PR-8 Breast Cancer Risk Factors Case Studies
- PR-9 Breast Cancer Risk Reduction Personal Action Plan
- PR-10 Eating Well With Canada’s Food Guide
- PR-11 Canada’s Physical Activity Guide to Active, Healthy Living
- PR-12 Snack Attack

Facilitator Resources

- FR-5 Breast Cancer Risk Factors
- FR-6 Finding Accurate Information and Interpreting the Statistics
- Power-Point Presentation: Lesson 2: Reduce Your Risk
- FR-7 Class Brainstorm Facilitator Guide
- FR-8 Breast Cancer Risk Factors Case Studies Facilitator Reference
This lesson introduces the role lifestyle factors (physical activity, nutrition, alcohol, and tobacco use) has on risk reduction for breast cancer. Appropriate background information about this subject is provided in Breast Cancer Risk Factors (FR-5). In cases where participants may inquire about oral contraceptives, abortion, breast feeding or pesticide exposure and their relationship to breast cancer risk, the appropriate evidence based information is included in this facilitator resource as well.

This lesson also addresses some of the challenges faced when trying to access information about certain health inquiries. Finding Accurate Information and Interpreting the Statistics (FR-6) provides facilitators with some background information about the complexity of cancer research and many of the mixed messages that surround this disease. This facilitator resource speaks to these challenges and may be helpful to provide clarification in response to students in your classroom.

When delivering this lesson to participants, be sure to initiate the topic with a brief discussion about the complexity of breast cancer. Convey to participants that there are a lot of things we do know about factors that might increase one’s risk for breast cancer. As well, that there are also a lot of things we do not know about breast cancer and what may cause it. The following lesson provides some information about what the research is currently saying. It is important to suggest to adolescents that although we may live a healthy lifestyle and do everything “right,” there is no guarantee we won’t ever get breast cancer. We do, however, know of some things that adolescents can do now and throughout their lifetime that will help reduce their chances of developing breast cancer. This lesson should emphasize to “act on what you already know”; eat well, be physically active, avoid exposure to tobacco smoke and if they consume alcohol, to drink no more than one alcoholic beverage per day.

Suggestions for Instruction

1. **Power-Point Presentation**: Lesson 2: Reduce Your Risk. Following completion of this activity, be sure to distribute Resource List (PR-5), Mythbusting Links (PR-6) and Health Links (PR-7).

2. **Class Brainstorm**: Refer to the Class Brainstorm Facilitator Guide (FR-7) prior to facilitating this learning activity. Address the questions, a) what are some lifestyle factors that might reduce one’s risk of breast cancer/cancer?, b) when confronted with a specific cancer inquiry, what resources would you access in order to learn more about the subject?, and c) what questions would you ask
yourself in order to determine whether or not a web-site was providing you with the most accurate, up-to-date information? Following completion of this activity, be sure to distribute Resource List (PR-5), Mythbusting Links (PR-6) and Health Links (PR-7).

3. **Breast Cancer Risk Factors Case Studies**: Note: prior to facilitating this learning activity, be sure to either show the power-point presentation (see learning activity #1) OR initiate a class brainstorm (see learning activity #2) about lifestyle factors that may reduce breast cancer risk (see suggested lesson templates). Working in groups, each group is assigned a different Case Study (Erin, Jenny, Abby or Sylvia). Explain to the class that each case study represents a risk profile that includes characteristics that may increase a woman’s risk for breast cancer and characteristics that may reduce her risk for breast cancer. Using the Breast Cancer Risk Chart, each group is required to a) identify all the characteristics in each woman’s profile that may reduce her risk for breast cancer and may increase her risk for breast cancer, b) identify with a check mark in the corresponding column whether each identified characteristic may increase her risk for breast cancer or may reduce her risk for breast cancer, and c) recommend any potential risk reduction behaviors for her in the risk reduction action column. Note: it is not necessary for the group to come to a consensus on a list of recommended risk reduction activities, rather a variety of suggested activities should be encouraged. Each group should appoint a recorder (to record characteristics and risk reduction actions) and a presenter (to report back to the class) for their group. Allow 10 minutes for groups to respond to the profiles and then have each presenter report back to class about their profile. Then, initiate a discussion about all four profiles.

4. **Breast Cancer Risk Reduction Personal Action Plan**: Note: prior to facilitating this activity, be sure to show the power-point presentation (see learning activity #1) or initiate a class brainstorm (see learning activity #2) about lifestyle factors that may reduce breast cancer risk (see lesson templates).

5. **Snack Attack**: Working in groups of 2-4, each group must come up with as many mini meal ideas as possible from the list of foods provided. One participant from each group will write down the ideas the group comes up with. At the end of the allotted time, a participant from each group reads off their mini meal ideas. The remainder of the class decides whether the ideas presented fit the criteria, i.e. they contain a food from at least two food groups, and a score is given. The group with the highest score wins. One mark is given for each acceptable idea. One bonus mark is given for a) each mini meal that contains more than two food groups and, b) if whole grain products (whole grain bread, cereal, bagel, pita, tortilla, crackers, pasta, brown rice) are in the meal. See **Snack Attack** (PR-12) for participant resource.
Suggested Lesson Templates

Lesson Template 1 (approximate delivery time = 1 hour)
• Class Brainstorm
• Breast Cancer Risk Factors Case Studies
• Snack Attack

Lesson Template 2 (approximate delivery time = 1 hour)
• Power Point Presentation
• Breast Cancer Risk Factors Case Studies
• Breast Cancer Risk Reduction Personal Action Plan

Suggestions for Assessment

• Journal Reflection: Reflect on your lifestyle. Assess your current health behavior practices that may reduce your risk of breast cancer. What, if any, lifestyle practices might you need to change/work on to contribute to the absence of disease?

• Performance Task: Participants are to come up with an individual, specific inquiry about breast cancer. Participants work through the following check list to answer their inquiry:
  □ identify specific breast cancer inquiry
  □ specify what organizations and facilities you could contact to follow up on your inquiry
  □ make contact with specific organization (through web-site, library source, personal visit, phone contact)
  □ produce documentation/report on what you found
  □ seek clarification on document from organization if necessary
  □ demonstrate understanding of information produced/accurate interpretation of statistics

Key References

American Cancer Society. (July 19, 2002). *Breast feeding can reduce a woman’s risk of breast cancer.* [cited February 5, 2007] Available at: http://www.cancer.org/docroot/NWS/content/NWS_1_1x_Breastfeeding_CanReduce_A_Womans_Risk_Of_Breast_Cancer.asp


National Cancer Institute. (Date unknown). *Cancer risk: Understanding the puzzle.* [cited January, 2007] Available at:


Stats at George Mason University. (Date unknown). *Checking out the facts and figures behind the news.* [cited February 6, 2007] Available at: [http://stats.org/](http://stats.org/)


