

# PURSUIT

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Florida Blue   
BetterYou 

A monthly wellness newsletter from Better You

## Good Vision Is No Accident



Vision loss can't always be reversed, but good lifestyle choices can help protect your sight. You may not be able to stop some causes, like aging and genetics. But healthy decisions can help lessen their impact.

The most common lifestyle behaviors that affect your vision health are:

- **Smoking.** Did you know smoking is a major cause in blindness? If you smoke or use tobacco, there are free resources to assist you in quitting. If you're ready to quit, call 800-QUIT-NOW (800-784-8669). Or go online to [smokefree.gov](https://www.smokefree.gov) or [tobaccofreeflorida.com](https://www.tobaccofreeflorida.com).
- **Alcohol.** Too much alcohol can cause significant damage to your eye nerves and muscles. "Moderate alcohol" means no more than two drinks per day for men or one drink per day for women.
- **Diet and supplements.** Fruits and vegetables are the best sources of antioxidants to fight damage to your eyes. Focus on eating a wide variety of colorful fruits and vegetables for foods rich in vitamins A, C and E.
- **Light exposure.** Ultraviolet rays (UV) can cause cataracts and eye cancer. These rays can be reflected off water, snow and ice, so it's

important to protect your eyes. The best protection is to wear sunglasses with UV-B protection and a hat when outside in the daylight. Also, reduce screen time because the light and being too close to the screen can weaken eye muscles.

- **Physical activity.** The pressure inside your eyes increases when you sit for too long. Restricted blood flow to your retina and optic nerve can cause vision problems. Add regular physical activity into your day and get up to move for every hour spent sitting.

Source: [National Center for Biotechnology Information](https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4111111/)

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# Gut Health Influences Overall Health

Sometimes, good health or bad is a gut feeling. Literally.

Your gut has a direct impact on your health. Colorectal cancer is the third most common cancer in men and women. But it can be prevented with early detection of precancerous polyps. That's why the medical community recommends colonoscopy screening at age 50.

There are other ways to protect the gut and help reduce the risk of colorectal cancer.

## First, eat nutrient-rich foods.

It also means eating lots of vegetables. The goal is a healthy digestive system or microbiome. It's one that not only breaks down

food but also regulates metabolism and boosts immunity. Here's a list:

- **Colorful vegetables and fruits.** You'll get foods rich in vitamins, minerals and fiber to keep your system regular. The nutrients and antioxidants may help prevent cancer and fight inflammation.
- **Beans.** Soybeans, peas and lentils are good sources of fiber and antioxidants. They also contain flavonoids which stunt tumor growth.
- **Whole grains.** Oatmeal, whole wheat bread and brown rice are also good fiber sources. Fiber can pick up cancer-causing compounds in the colon and carry them out of your body.

- **Dairy.** Studies show that calcium-rich dairy products can reduce the risk of colon growths and colorectal cancer. Yogurt and kefir have live cultures rich in probiotics that pamper the microbiome. (Pickled and fermented vegetables do too.)

**Second keep red and processed meats to a minimum.** Try to avoid beef jerky, deli meats, hot dogs, bacon, pepperoni and ham.

**And third, make healthy lifestyle choices.** Get at least seven hours of sleep a night. Manage stress when possible. And exercise regularly.

**Resources:** [WebMD.com](http://WebMD.com); [www.mayoclinic.org](http://www.mayoclinic.org); [cancer.org](http://cancer.org)

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## Roasted Salmon with Smoky Chickpeas and Greens (Serves 4)

### Ingredients:

- 2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil, divided
- 1 tablespoon smoked paprika
- ½ teaspoon salt, divided, plus a pinch
- 1 (15 ounce) can no-salt-added chickpeas, rinsed
- 1/3 cup buttermilk
- ¼ cup mayonnaise
- ¼ cup chopped fresh chives and or dill, plus more for garnish
- ½ teaspoon ground pepper, divided
- ¼ teaspoon garlic powder
- 10 cups chopped kale

- ¼ cup water
- 1¼ pounds wild salmon, cut into 4 portions.

### Directions

Position racks in upper third and middle of oven; preheat to 425 degrees.

Combine 1 tablespoon oil, paprika and ¼ teaspoon salt in a medium bowl. Pat chickpeas thoroughly dry, then toss with the paprika mixture. Spread on a rimmed baking sheet. Bake the chickpeas on the upper rack, stirring twice, for 30 minutes.

Meanwhile, puree buttermilk, mayonnaise, herbs, ¼ teaspoon pepper and garlic powder in a blender until smooth. Set aside.

Heat the remaining 1 tablespoon oil in a large skillet over medium heat. Add kale and cook, stirring



occasionally, for 2 minutes. Add water and continue cooking until the kale is tender, about 5 minutes. Remove from heat and stir in a pinch of salt.

Remove the chickpeas from the oven and move them to one side of the pan. Place salmon on the other side and season with the remaining ¼ teaspoon each salt and pepper. Bake until the salmon is just cooked through, 5 to 8 minutes.

Drizzle the reserved dressing on the salmon, garnish with more herbs, if desired, and serve with the kale and chickpeas.

*Recipe courtesy of EatingWell.com. For nutritional information, [click here](#).*

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