

# Franklin County RELAY FOR LIFE

It's about being a community that takes up the fight...

**Join the Fight!**



THE FRANKLIN TIMES ★★★ THURSDAY, APRIL 25, 2024 ★★★ SECTION B

## Give Cancer the "Boot" & Disco for a Cure!

### RELAY FOR LIFE FRANKLIN COUNTY

TERRELL LANE MIDDLE SCHOOL (GYM)  
FRIDAY, APRIL 26 • 6 P.M. TO 10 P.M.



**VOLUNTEERS MAKE A DIFFERENCE.** Relay volunteers showed up to work hard for the cancer survivors during the annual dinner. Left to right, kneeling: Hope Benton, Danette Cheatham, Sandra McConnell and Susette Spivey McConnell; standing, left to right: Clara Alston, Mary Fogg, Susie Davis, Janice Cheatham, Barbara Terrell, Danielle Benton, Debra Brodie, Delphenia Livingston, Cornette Cheatham, Mildred Cheatham, Corneilus Cheatham, Alice Richardson, Barbara Alston; in back: Ben Benton and David Benton.

## A message from Franklin Co. Relay for Life

Dear Citizens of Franklin County,

We would like to thank the residents of Franklin County for your donations and support on Relay for Life event in Louisburg, North Carolina.

Thank you for not just taking time to be an active member of the community but for all the work you do. Success cannot be achieved without your passion, knowledge and enthusiasm.

We are very appreciative of the many prayers, participation, and dedication of all who were involved in the Franklin County Relay Event. Many of the teams are still doing their part in raising donations along with the caregivers and everyone continued to show their support and love in remembrance of those who have gained their wings.

We have worked hard to get to this point throughout the year to make this event happen. We do it because we have all been touched by cancer. From research to education, prevention to diagnosis, and treatment to

recovery, the American Cancer Society provides support to everyone impacted by all types of cancer, at all stages, every day. Your dollars make an impact.

These are certainly challenging times, and a time when the American Cancer Society's mission matters more than ever. We remain committed to funding the most innovative cancer research and training in the country to benefit cancer patients and their families. Because cancer has not stopped. So, neither have we.

Without you, cancer wins. With you, we save lives!

And a special thank you goes to the committee. The success of this event is in so many ways a reflection of your dedication, spirit, and passionate commitment to your fight against cancer. Thank you!

We thank all the caregivers and without our caregivers, some cancer patients would not have the ability to keep appointments, enjoy a quality meal, or have a

gentle hand to hold during treatment. Again, thank you caregivers for all that you do or have done to make the cancer journey a little more comfortable for cancer patients.

We wanted to take a moment to reflect again on what brought us here ...

Relay For Life gives us the opportunity to celebrate. We celebrate the cancer survivors in our lives and support them in their fight against this disease. We celebrate caregivers and thank them for everything they do. We celebrate taking one more step toward a cancer-free future.

Relay For Life also gives us time to remember those we have lost. They are never far from our hearts, and it is at Relay that we can come together and remember their lives. We remember them with every step as we walk around our communities, and they motivate us to keep going. We gaze at their luminaries and remember the father, mother, sister, brother, son, daughter, husband, wife, neighbor,

or friend that person still is to us. Remembering them helps us remember what brings us here. Thank you for joining in this fight. We fought back harder than ever tonight. The ceremony represents the HOPE that we all share that the day will come when cancer is eliminated.

We are so grateful and thankful for the survivors of all ages; they are the reason we continue to fight. Their participation inspires HOPE



**Danette Cheatham,**  
Event Chair Volunteer

in those currently battling cancer. We have two themes this year. The theme for 2024 is "Disco for a Cure a 70's theme" and "Give Cancer the Boot." We are celebrating, remembering, and fighting back by participating. We honor cancer survivors, pay tribute to those we have gained their wings to this disease, and raise money to help fight cancer in our communities and show our caregivers that we appreciate all that they do.

A special thanks to the many Relay for Life Volunteers who have worked to make this event a great success, celebrating the lives of those who have battled cancer, remembering loved ones lost, and pledging to fight back against the disease.

We certainly appreciate the generosity of this year's corporate sponsors. Relay for Life would not be possible without them and you.

Special thank you to Chet and Pam Gurganus for their contributions of \$5,000 for Luminary displays.

We would also like to

give a special thanks to Donna Cunard and staff of *The Franklin Times*. She has been our official reporter for life for several years. We appreciate her continual support in donating her time and services for our events.

Thank you all again to citizens of Franklin County, the volunteers, Sheriff Kevin White and the Sheriff's Department, the corporate sponsors, Maria Parham Franklin, Terrell Lane Middle School Facility, Franklin County School District, Inc (Central Office), Down East Tent Rentals, LLC, Holley Durham our Senior Development Manager II, Unified Event Support, Lena's Catering, and to our survivors for giving us hope. With your continued support, we can win the fight against cancer in our lifetime. We hope to see you all next year at the Relay for Life event 2025!

See you next year, EVERYONE! Thank you! God Bless!

Volunteer Event Relay for Life Chair,  
Danette Cheatham



**SCHEDULE OF EVENTS**

**Friday, April 26, 2024**

**TERRELL LANE MIDDLE SCHOOL GYM**

**6 p.m.**

**Opening Ceremonies/Welcome Invocation, National Anthem**

**6:15 p.m.**

**Survivor Lap & Caregiver Lap Sponsor & Team Lap (Survivors are requested to be in the designated area by 5:30)**

**7:20 p.m.**

**Line Dances (on one end of the basketball court) Best Country Outfit(s) and 70's Costume(s)**

**8:30 p.m.**

**Commemoration Gaynall Thomas-Jones Family**

**8:45 p.m.**

**Luminary Service & Memorial Walk (Please remain quiet during this time)**

**9:45 p.m. Closing Ceremony**

**2024 Relay Committee**

- Danette Cheatham, Event Chair/Accounting
- Mildred M. Cheatham, Survivor Chair
- Hope Benton, Luminaria Chair
- Cornelius Cheatham, Logistics Chair /Survivor Committee
- Delphenia Livingstone, Survivor Committee
- William Perry Sr., Logistics/Survivor Committee
- David Benton, Logistics/Survivor Committee
- Danielle Benton, Luminaria/Survivor
- Linda Frederickson, Recruitment
- Clark Frederickson, Logistics
- Ben Benton, Luminaria/Survivor Committee
- Cornette Cheatham, Survivor Committee
- Mary Fogg, Survivor Committee
- Evelyn Blacknall, Survivor Committee
- Barbara Alston, Survivor Committee
- Susie Davis, Survivor Committee
- Alice Richardson, Survivor Committee
- Veronica McEachin-Davis, Survivor & Luminaria Committee
- Debra Brodie, Survivor Committee
- Armenta Eaton, Historian

**2024 Relay for Life Teams**

- Team Name and Captain**
- Concord Missionary Baptist Church- Danette Cheatham
- Bunn Elementary School- Lisa Barham
- Jones Chapel MBC- Grady Neal
- Centerville Baptist Church- Ning Auton
- New Hope Freedom & Deliverance Cathedral- Veronica McEachin-Davis
- Walnut Grove Missionary Baptist Church- Jackie Rogers
- Shady Grove Baptist Church- Delphenia Livingston
- Concerned Women for Justice of Franklin County- Evelyn Blackwell
- Pilot Missionary Baptist Church- Sherry Newell
- Mitchell Baptist Church- Gloria Foster
- Gethsemane Missionary Baptist Church- Jessica Bland
- Mt. Moriah Family and Friends- Debra Brodie
- Team Diane- Teresa Edwards
- Mitchiner's Grove Baptist Church- N/A
- Nelson Chapel Baptist Church- Cora Campbell
- Perry's Missionary Baptist Church- Barbara Alston
- FUMC "Staying Alive"- Linda Frederickson
- Nu Epsilon- Georgia Young
- Youngsville Elementary School- Toni Bowden
- Edward Best Elementary School- Katelyn Dwyer
- Long Mill Elementary- Pachette Dunn
- Terrell Lane Middle School- Susette McConnell
- Cedar Creek Middle School- Laura VanderHorst
- LOMES- Erica Mills
- Rocky Chapel Missionary Baptist Church- Jermaine Brodie
- Louisburg Elementary- Trenace Gilmore
- Jay's World- Latoya Whitehead
- Franklinton Elementary School- Kathryn Smart
- Franklin County ELT- Hope Benton
- Faith Walkers- Angela Hayes
- Bunn Middle School- Demetria Moore
- Allen- Tyesha Allen

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**Surviving cancer- one year at a time**

By Charlena Lee

Thanks to the American Cancer Society of Franklin County for recognizing me as this years Cancer Survivor.

I'm Charlena Lee, I grew up in the little town of Franklinton, and I'm the proud owner of Sugar Grinders Creamery and Bakery in downtown Franklinton. I'm entering my fifth year as a breast cancer survivor; the road was not easy by any means.

Let's go back to December 2019 when all I wanted to do was take a routine mammogram, you know for your company insurance. Can you imagine sitting in the waiting room and watching ladies come and go and you are still waiting? The thought of this can't be good was becoming very clear. As soon as the nurse called me back and asked me to come in to talk with the radiologist, breast cancer never entered my mind. As he pointed to the image on the screen, it was as if I heard the teacher from Charlie Brown, wah-wah-wah-wah.

This clearly came to me that this was over my head and that no one could fix this but God. So, in the car on the way home, I told God, "This One Is on You", I know this one is beyond me. I don't remember the drive home, but it was all a blur. Calling my husband on my way to say, we'll talk about this when I get home.

Surely there was no time for me to think, why me? Well, why not me? I'm not excluded from anything,

and I just need to do what I need to do. I told my husband what the doctor said, and he said I was going to be fine. I had a moment when he said that. "They didn't say it to you. They said it to me," and I burst into tears. That was cry number one. I knew that close to Christmas I could not tell my daughters and that I needed to wait until the doctors had determined the stage of cancer. I held it until after the New Year.

The saving grace was I was still working a full-time job as a sales representative for Radio One. I had started culinary pastry school in January and still running my bakery Sugar Grinders in Franklinton. Then the pandemic hit. I was sent home on March 17, 2020, to work from home, and started my first chemo treatment March 20, 2020. God always has a plan. I could work, do school and take treatments without interrupting too much of my life. But God!

Fast forward, nine weeks straight of chemotherapy and six intense treatments of radiation, which would have been 15 treatments, but I chose to double up my treatments. I know losing my hair, eyelashes, and all other places that hair might grow - was gone. Not my hair! I am so blessed that my hair grew back because sometimes that does not happen. I carried a lot of fluid and sometimes I could barely crawl up the stairs in my home. Most days, when I went into my office to work from home, I never went back upstairs until bedtime. I just



Cancer survivor Charlena Lee

couldn't do it! Some days I felt like crap, and I told my husband I can see why some people give up, but I needed to show my family that since they were supporting me and making sure that I was alright with work, school, and getting as much normal day-to-day life as possible, I could do it, and I knew God had me.

I've come to realize that God places you in certain situations. He will test your faith. He allows you to go through it so that you can help others and know that it was not you alone and that He carried you. I've come to know more and more people that are going through or have gone through various types of cancer. I always try to give an encouraging word because someone did the same for me. Each fight is

different and believe me it's a fight. Each one teaches one. Even though there are different types of cancer, and each one has a particular type of treatment, some longer or some shorter. A few may not be survivors, but the majority are.

In the end, God allowed me to go through it. I didn't stay in it, and I can now help someone else to understand how important your faith plays a role in your recovery.

To those of you reading this story, please keep a check on your health. Your body will tell you when something is wrong - pay attention! But just know that your faith, a humble heart, and your trust in God will always outweigh any diagnoses for cancer or any other life-threatening disease. It's cancer - Not A Death Sentence.

**Stepping up for Relay, year after year**



There are many hands that go into Franklin County Relay for Life every year. These volunteers rise to the challenge each year. Clockwise from above, left to right: Danette Cheatham, Hope Benton and Mildred Cheatham; Mildred and Cornelius Cheatham; The Bentons: Hope, David, Danielle and Ben.

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**Thank You!**



# Simple ways to cut cancer risk

Cancer affects people from all walks of life. According to the World Cancer Research Fund International, there were an estimated 18.1 million cancer cases around the world in 2020, and the breakdown was almost even among men (9.3 million) and women (8.8 million).

Great strides have been

made in cancer research in the twenty-first century, and that has led to countless lives being saved. Cancer prevention strategies are another potentially lifesaving tool in the fight against the disease. A significant percentage of cancer deaths could be prevented. In fact, the Prevent Cancer® Foundation reports that

research indicates about 50 percent of cancer deaths are preventable with the knowledge individuals have today.

Perhaps the most comforting aspect of cancer prevention is that many of the strategies that can reduce instances of the disease are simple. That means individuals won't have to go to great lengths

to include these strategies in their approach to cancer prevention.

- **Avoid tobacco.** The link between tobacco use and cancer has been known for a long time, and the good news is the message touting the importance of avoiding tobacco is working. The American Cancer Society reports that cigarette smoking rates had reached historic lows in 2019. While that's great news, it might not tell the whole story, as consumers now have many other ways to use tobacco, each of which has been linked to cancer. So it's not simply avoiding cigarettes, but also cigars, hookahs, chewing tobacco, vaping products, and more, that is necessary to reduce cancer risk.

- **Shield your skin from the sun.** The PCF notes that exposure to the sun's ultraviolet rays causes the most skin cancers. The WCRFI reports that melanoma of the skin is the thirteenth most common cancer in men and the fifteenth most common cancer in women across the globe. Protecting the skin from the sun is as simple as applying a sunscreen with a minimum sun protection factor (SPF) of 30 and covering up when spending long periods of time in the



**EAT YOUR VEGGIES.** Finding ways to eat healthier may reduce your cancer risk.

sun. The PCF urges individuals to avoid tanning beds and protect their skin year-round, including in winter.

- **Utilize fruits and vegetables in your fight against cancer.** The popularity of plant-based diets is on the rise. In fact, retail sales of plant-based foods in the United States increased by 11 percent in a single year between 2018 and 2019, according to data from the Plant Based Foods Association. A greater reliance on plant-based diets could go a long way toward reducing cancer deaths, as the PCF notes a 2021 study found that three servings of vegetables and two servings of fruit each day reduced the risk of cancer

death by 10 percent.

- **Avoid excessive alcohol consumption.** The PCF notes that alcohol has been linked to cancers of the breast, liver, esophagus, and colon. When consuming alcohol, women are urged to limit their consumption to one drink or fewer each day, while men should limit their consumption to two or fewer alcoholic beverages per day. The science is simple: the more alcohol a person drinks, the greater his or her risk for cancer.

Cancer prevention is a vital component of a healthy lifestyle, and there are many simple ways people can cut their cancer risk.

## What cancer does to the body

Cancer affects tens of millions of people each year. The World Health Organization said cancer accounted for nearly 10 million deaths in 2020, the most recent year for data.

Depending on where cancer strikes, various symptoms may present. However, cancer also affects the body as a whole. Here is a more in-depth look at how cancer affects the body and overall health.

- **Weight loss:** According to a 2011 article in the Journal of Genetics, weight loss occurs in up to 80 percent of people with cancer. Lost mass occurs in both muscle and fat tissue. Cancer may suppress the appetite and cause alterations in biochemical pathways for the production of proteins and other compounds necessary to maintain a healthy body weight and muscle composition.

- **Blood cell numbers:** Some cancers and cancer treatments can change the number of blood cells circulating in the blood, according to Cancer Research UK. White blood cell numbers may drop and risk of infection may increase. Cancer treatments may cause low levels of red blood cells, resulting in anemia, which can make a person feel tired and breathless and require a blood transfusion.

- **Decreased infection resistance:** Some mutations caused by cancer give cancer cells the ability to reduce or even cripple immune response, according to Healthfully. Therefore, the immune system becomes limited in its ability to recog-

nize foreign organisms. Viruses and bacteria may take hold. This is why many people who have cancer may ultimately die from pneumonia.

- **Hormonal changes:** Some cancers can produce hormones that will circulate and cause symptoms known as paraneoplastic syndrome. It may cause muscle weakness or even change the balance of salt and water in the body. Hormone therapies may be used in cancer treatments to help address the symptoms caused by the cancer.

- **Constipation:** Pain medications and chemotherapy can cause constipation. It's important to drink plenty of liquids and eat high-fiber diets to help combat this problem.

- **Fatigue:** Along with

weight loss, fatigue is another common body effect of cancer. Preserving energy by napping and resting, especially during treatment, can help.

- **Eye changes:** Chemotherapy can increase the risk of dry eye syndrome and the formation of cataracts, says OSHU Knight Cancer Institute. Additional vision problems may occur as well.

- **Premature aging:** Both cancer and the necessary treatments can speed up some signs of aging. For example, it may increase the risk of osteoporosis or bring on early menopause.

Cancer doesn't just affect the area of the body where it's located. The entire body can be affected by cancer and cancer treatments.

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# ACS guidelines for the early detection of cancer



Screening tests are used to find cancer before a person has any symptoms. Here are the American Cancer Society's recommendations to help guide you when you talk to your doctor about screening for certain cancers.

Health care facilities are providing cancer screening during the COVID-19 pandemic with many safety precautions in place. The American Cancer Society Get Screened campaign encourages people to start or restart their recommended cancer screenings. Regular screenings can help find and treat pre-cancers and cancers early, before they have a chance to spread. Visit Get Screened to learn about screening tests and what you can do to get on track with a cancer screening schedule that's right for you.

### Breast cancer

Women ages 40 to 44 should have the choice to start annual breast cancer screening with mammograms (x-rays of the breast) if they wish to do so.

Women age 45 to 54 should get mammograms every year.

Women 55 and older

should switch to mammograms every 2 years, or can continue yearly screening.

Screening should continue as long as a woman is in good health and is expected to live 10 more years or longer.

All women should be familiar with the known benefits, limitations, and potential harms linked to breast cancer screening.

Women should also know how their breasts normally look and feel and report any breast changes to a health care provider right away.

Some women – because of their family history, a genetic tendency, or certain other factors – should be screened with MRIs along with mammograms. (The number of women who fall into this category is very small.) Talk with a health care provider about your risk for breast cancer and the best screening plan for you.

### Colon and rectal cancer and polyps

For people at average risk for colorectal cancer, the American Cancer Society recommends starting regular screening at age 45. This can be done either with a sensitive test that looks for signs of cancer in a person's stool (a stool-based test), or with an exam that looks at the colon and rectum (a visual exam). Talk to your health care provider about which tests might be good options for you, and to your insurance provider about your coverage. No matter which test you choose, the most important thing is to get screened.

If you're in good health, you should continue regular screening through age 75.

For people ages 76 through 85, talk with your health care provider about whether continuing to get screened is right for you. When deciding, take into account your own preferences, overall health, and past screening history.

People over 85 should no longer get colorectal cancer screening.

If you choose to be screened with a test other than colonoscopy, any abnormal test result needs to be followed up with a colonoscopy.

### Cervical cancer

Cervical cancer screening should start at age 25. People

under age 25 should not be tested because cervical cancer is rare in this age group.

People between the ages of 25 and 65 should get a primary HPV (human papillomavirus) test\* done every 5 years. If a primary HPV test is not available, a co-test (an HPV test with a Pap test) every 5 years or a Pap test every 3 years are still good options.

(\*A primary HPV test is an HPV test that is done by itself for screening. The US Food and Drug Administration has approved certain tests to be primary HPV tests.)

The most important thing to remember is to get screened regularly, no matter which test you get.

People over age 65 who have had regular cervical cancer testing in the past 10 years with normal results should not be tested for cervical cancer. Once testing is stopped, it should not be started again. Those with a history of a serious cervical pre-cancer should continue to be tested for at least 25 years after that diagnosis, even if testing goes past age 65.

People whose cervix has been removed by surgery for reasons not related to cervical cancer or serious pre-cancer should not be tested.

People who have been vaccinated against HPV should still follow the screening recommendations for their age groups.

Some individuals – because of their health history (HIV infection, organ transplant, DES exposure, etc.) – may need a different screening schedule for cervical cancer. Talk to a health care provider about your history.

### Endometrial cancer

The American Cancer Society recommends that at the time of menopause, all women should be told about

the risks and symptoms of endometrial cancer. Women should report any unexpected vaginal bleeding or spotting to their doctors.

Some women – because of their history – may need to consider having a yearly endometrial biopsy. Please talk with a health care provider about your history.

### Lung cancer

The most recent version of the American Cancer Society (ACS) lung cancer screening guideline [from 2018] is being taken down while we review new scientific evidence to be included in the next update. While this important update is being completed, the ACS advises that health care providers, and people at increased risk for lung cancer, follow the recently updated recommendations for annual lung cancer screening from the US Preventive Services Task Force (USPSTF), the American Academy of Family Physicians (AAFP), or the American College of Chest Physicians. These organizations recommend yearly lung cancer screening with LDCT scans for people who:

- Are 50 to 80 years old and in fairly good health,
- and
- Currently smoke or have quit in the past 15 years,
- and
- Have at least a 20 pack-year smoking history. (This is the number of packs of cigarettes per day multiplied by the number of years smoked. For example, someone who smoked 2 packs a day for 10 years [2 x 10 = 20] has 20 pack-years of smoking, as does a person who smoked 1 pack a day for 20 years [1 x 20 = 20].)

In addition, it's important that people who are going to be screened: Receive counseling to quit

smoking if they currently smoke,

and Have been told by their doctor about the possible benefits, limits, and harms of screening with LDCT scans,

and Can go to a center that has experience in lung cancer screening and treatment.

### Prostate cancer

The American Cancer Society recommends that men make an informed decision with a health care provider about whether to be tested for prostate cancer.

Starting at age 50, men should talk to a health care provider about the pros and cons of testing so they can decide if testing is the right choice for them.

If you are African American or have a father or brother who had prostate cancer before age 65, you should have this talk with a health care provider starting at age 45.

If you decide to be tested, you should get a PSA blood test with or without a rectal exam. How often you're tested will depend on your PSA level.

### Take control of your health, and help reduce your cancer risk.

- Stay away from all forms of tobacco.
- Get to and stay at a healthy weight.
- Get moving with regular physical activity.
- Eat healthy with plenty of fruits and vegetables.
- It's best not to drink alcohol. If you do drink, have no more than 1 drink per day for women or 2 per day for men.
- Protect your skin.
- Know yourself, your family history, and your risks.
- Get regular check-ups and cancer screening tests.

## The most common cancers

More than 200 different types of cancer have been identified. However, the vast majority of cancer cases across the globe are attributed to a handful of types.

Cancer is a leading cause of death around the world and a major contributor to health disabilities. Recognition of the most common cancers may raise awareness of which cancers pose the biggest threat and how to reduce risk for these diseases. The following are the most common global cancers as well as the rankings for the most frequently diagnosed forms of the disease in the United States.

Per the World Health Organization, these were the most common cancers across the globe in terms of new cases in 2020, the most recent year for data.

1. Breast (2.26 million)
2. Lung (2.21 million)
3. Colon and rectum (1.93 million)
4. Prostate (1.41 million)
5. Non-melanoma skin (1.20 million)
6. Stomach (1.09 million)

The National Cancer Institute lists these cancers as the most common in the United States, with the estimated new cases expected for 2023.

1. Breast (297,790 women; 2,800 men)
2. Prostate (288,300)
3. Lung, including bronchus (238,340)
4. Colon and rectal (153,020)
5. Melanoma (97,610)

### 6. Bladder (82,290)

The Canadian Cancer Society estimates that, in 2022, an average of 641 Canadians were diagnosed with cancer every day. Certain cancers are more common than others in Canada. Excluding non-melanoma skin cancer, Best Health lists these as the six most common cancers in Canada (specific numbers are unavailable).

1. Lung and bronchus
2. Colorectal
3. Breast (which also happens to be the most common cancer in women)
4. Prostate (which is the most common cancer among men in all but two Canadian provinces)
5. Bladder
6. Non-hodgkin lymphoma

Individuals should engage their doctors in conversations about the applicable screenings for these cancers. Women are urged to get breast mammograms at set intervals. Men can undergo prostate specific antigen screening. Colonoscopy can help inform both men and women of their risk for colon and rectal cancers. Lung cancer screenings typically are not routine unless a person has a high risk of lung cancer or is a longtime smoker.

Spreading knowledge of common cancers and promoting proactive screening and healthy lifestyles may help to reduce cancer rates across the globe.

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# Relay dinner brings smiles



Volunteers Alice Richardson (left) and Barbara Alston



Cancer survivors Daxter and Betty Brooks, married 50 years



Twins Bernice Richardson (left) and Vernice Harris, cancer survivors



Cancer survivor Eula Gupton and daughter Deborah Coley



Cancer survivor Ulic Wilson



Cancer survivor Ruby Williams



Survivors Linda and Steve Richardson



Cancer survivor Marie Kidd



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# Nutritional value of tomatoes

Tomatoes contain vitamins A, C, and K. Tomatoes are also a good source of niacin, chromium, and potassium. Vitamin C protects the body from free radicals which destroy the healthy cells in the body. Niacin helps to lower triglyceride, a fat present in our blood. Tomatoes are also rich in lycopene, a compound that gives tomatoes their color. Processed tomato products have higher concentrations of lycopene. Studies show that tomato and tomato product consumption is associated with a reduced risk of:

- Ovarian cancer, especially in premenopausal women
- Digestive tract cancers (mouth, throat, esophagus, pancreas, colon, and rectum)
- Cardiovascular disease

### How to Purchase Tomatoes and Tomato Products

Avoid soft or mushy tomatoes with blemishes. Cherry tomatoes are small round tomatoes. Grape tomatoes are small and oblong shaped with a concentrated flavor. Roma tomatoes are an oblong shape, medium size with shiny red skin and firm flesh. When purchasing tomato products, check the expiration dates on the containers. Choose containers free of damage, such as dented cans.



the expiration dates on the containers. Choose containers free of damage, such as dented cans.

### Storing Tomatoes

Tomatoes should not be refrigerated. Tomatoes should be stored above 50 °F to avoid flavor and quality loss. Handle with care to avoid bruising. Tomato products should be stored at room temperature unless the container states otherwise.

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### Preparing Tomatoes

Tomatoes may be consumed fresh or cooked. To peel, cut a small "x" at base of tomato and dip in boiling water briefly then place tomato in ice water. The skin will wrinkle and you will be able to remove it easily.

### How to Eat More Tomatoes Daily

- Serve tomatoes fresh as a snack
- Serve tomatoes in omelets
- Add tomatoes to sandwiches and wraps
- Make tomato sauce and serve with pasta
- Drink tomato juice
- Make salsa
- Preserve tomatoes when in season

### A Point of Caution

Canned tomato products such as tomato sauce, juice, or paste can be a high source of sodium in the diet. Try purchasing low sodium varieties of these products.

Reference: University of Kentucky, College of Agriculture

## Fresh Salsa

### Ingredients:

- 2 tomatoes, chopped
- 1/2 onion, chopped
- 3 jalapeno, minced
- 1/4 cup cilantro, chopped
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- Juice of 1 lime

### Directions:

1. In a medium bowl, mix all ingredients.
2. Serve or store salsa in refrigerator for up to three days in a covered plastic or glass container.

### Nutrition information per 1/4 cup:

Total Calories 24, Total Fat 0 g, Protein 1 g, Carbohydrates 6 g, Dietary Fiber 1 g, Saturated Fat 0 g, Sodium 150 mg

www.whatscooking.fns.usda.gov



## Dominique Simon

NC Cooperative Extension Family & Consumer Science Agent



# Living 50 Plus

## Kerr-Tar Senior Games

Ilean Mattocks representing Franklin County in Senior Games Shuffleboard hosted by Person County.



Melvin Kelly, official for the Senior Games Billiards Tournament watches John (JB) Wheless taking his shot. The billiards tourney was hosted by Franklin County at the Louisburg Senior Center.



Matthew (BB) Williams alongside Barbara Stewart from the Kerr-Tar Regional Council of Governments posing for a moment during the Singles Bowling for Senior Games at Before the 1st Frame in Hendsen, hosted by Franklin County.



Willie Bell Taylor showing off her first place medal for her age group during Cornhole for the 2024 Senior Games hosted by Vance County.



Robert and Jessie Baynard enjoying the Easter festivities.



Nidina Pee and (left) Carrella Holliday working on an Easter craft.

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