

Half of cancers related to lifestyle

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A report by the American Cancer Society says that half the cancer deaths in the United States could be prevented by lifestyle changes, like quitting smoking.

The report predicted 564,830 cancer deaths in 2006, with 170,000 from smoking-related cancer, the Wall Street Journal said. About one-third of the total are likely to be related to a combination of bad diet, lack of exercise and overweight.

Another lifestyle factor is overexposure to sunlight, which can cause skin cancers, especially the deadly melanoma. Many people also fail to get regular screenings for cancers like breast and colon, which are usually curable if caught early.

"What's astonishing is how small the numbers are in terms of the population actually doing these things," said Vilma Cokkinides, one of the report's authors and program director of risk-factor surveillance at the American Cancer Society.

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