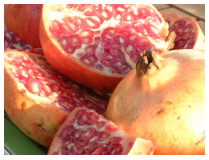

Most men's New Year's resolutions sound the same: we all want to get healthier and make or save more money.

This year, why not get a little more specific in ways that delve beyond simply trying to quit smoking, drink less or exercise more? This year, resolve to get healthier by developing a plan for keeping your prostate healthy and preventing prostate cancer.

The shocking truth is that a man is 35 percent more likely to get prostate cancer than a woman is to get breast cancer - yet it's a topic most men and their families never address before they are diagnosed. And it's not just an old man's disease. While 75 percent of new cases occur in men over 50, many younger men have had to face prostate cancer as they approached their 40th birthdays.

The good news is there are many ways to keep your prostate healthy, especially if you buckle down and get proactive about it.

"There are a number of easy things you can do, ranging from getting annual screenings to developing the right eating and lifestyle habits that can help promote good prostate health," says Dr. Jonathan Simons, CEO and President of the Prostate Cancer Foundation.

For starters, speak with your doctor about when to get tested. Early detection and treatment are the best weapons against prostate cancer. With early treatment, the five year survival rate is more than 90 percent - among the highest of all types of cancers.

The American Cancer Society recommends all men over 50 get checked yearly and those with family histories begin at 45. In short: all men over 40 should speak with their doctors to develop proactive prostate health plans that are right for them.

But visiting the doctor is only one thing that should be on your agenda.

"There are strong indicators in our research that diet and lifestyle are very important with this particular form of cancer," said Dr. Meir Stampfer, Professor of Epidemiology and Nutrition, Harvard School of Public Health. "When we look at men from other cultures like in Asia, the rates of prostate cancer are significantly lower than in the U.S. Yet when these same men move here, within one generation, the rates increase very rapidly. We believe there is a clear correlation to how we live and eat."

Here are some things you can resolve to do in your daily life:

* Eat prostate-healthful foods. Eat more broccoli and drink pomegranate juice. The science may be complicated, with talk of antioxidants, compounds and electrons. But the conclusions are clear: consuming broccoli and pomegranate juice or pomegranate extract is good for the prostate.

* Don't char meat. Charring meats at high temperatures can produce cancer-causing carcinogens that lodge in the prostate. These may cause errors in reading and replicating DNA, resulting in mutations that contribute to prostate cancer formation. Flip meat often so the outside does not burn, marinate meat in ingredients that don't create crusts, precook burgers in the microwave, and scrape off charred material. Try broiling or stir-frying meats instead of grilling them.

* Eat less meat. You don't need to become vegetarian, but consider replacing chicken, beef, veal or lamb with soy protein or fish, taking a page from the Asian diet.

* Keep fat off your middle. Research indicates men with more belly fat are at a higher risk for prostate cancer. So consult your doctor and start an exercise plan and maintain an active

lifestyle.

For more information on prostate cancer prevention, detection and treatment visit www.pcf.org.