

Health and Wellness

Eat to Avoid Cancer:

By Laura Jimenez, M.S.W. (www.tpsw.org – laura@tpsw.org)

Introduction

While we don't have control over everything in our lives (particularly due to environmental and genetic factors), we do have control over our diet and lifestyle. One of those aspects is making informed decisions about the foods and nutrients we eat and consume. Although no one receives absolute promises in life, perhaps new information might best position readers and their families to avoid cancer. While reading this article, keep in mind that some foods actually increase your cancer risk while others decrease your risk and strengthen your immune system. This topic was intentionally chosen because one in two males and one in three females will develop cancer at any point in their lifetime. No doubt it is wise for everyone to learn more and make the most informed decisions.

Why Are So Many People Developing Cancer:

Over history, at least in the United States, many habits that were highly protective of a healthy lifestyle have been curtailed and instead replaced with unhealthy highly processed foods and soft drinks. Further complicating the situation is the lack of physical activities. Rather than eating what we want and living a sedentary lifestyle, instead we need to adapt a mindset to eat what our bodies need and move our bodies to the best of our ability so that we reduce our chances as much as possible of developing or exacerbating any illness.

Foods to Consider Removing From Your Diet:

STOP doing anything that is promoting poor health generally. Then, the preventive strategies will have the best chance to make an impact. Here are four foods to consider removing from your diet:

- 1) No CAFO's. Red meat is not necessarily bad unless the animal is reared in "confined animal feeding operations" (CAFO's) which are a MAJOR contributor to cancer. Animals raised under these conditions are given antibiotics, growth hormones and other veterinary drugs that get stored in their tissues. Also, cooking meat over high heat creates heterocyclic amines which further worsens the carcinogenic (cancer causing) effect. Instead, cook organically-raised, grass-fed meats over medium heat.
- 2) No Sugar. Drastically reduce or eliminate all forms of sugar (e.g., fructose, glucose) and some grains. Not only is sugar a universal mechanism for chronic disease, but it also fuels every single chronic disease, including cancers and increases inflammation and oxygen free radicals. The more that is consumed, the faster cancer grows. See link (F) below for an expanded explanation of grains.
- 3) No Bad Fats. Examples of bad fats are: animal fats from CAFO-raised animals, trans fats, partially hydrogenated or hydrogenated fats. Instead, consume healthy fats from avocados and oils containing Omega-3.
- 4) No Xenoestrogens. Stay away from BPA. See links (C) and (E) below for further explanation.

Foods to Consider Adding to Your Diet:

Plant-based foods are packed with nutrients, vitamins and minerals that are essential for good health. According to Dr. Christine Horner, "Every plant has some anti-cancer properties to them. There are some that are standouts. Cruciferous vegetables are something that I really recommend. They're a family of vegetables that include broccoli, cauliflower, kale, collards, and Brussels sprouts." Fortunately, the foods that help with preventing one type of cancer oftentimes help to prevent other types of cancer as well as many chronic illnesses:

Apples	Artichokes	Berries (all)	Bok Choy	Broccoli	Brussels sprouts	Cabbage
Cauliflower	Cherries	Collards	Dark chocolate	Garlic	Ginseng	Grape seed oil
Grapefruit	Grapes	Green Tea	Kale	Lemon	Licorice	Olive oil
Oranges	Nutmeg	Parsley	Pineapple	Pumpkin	Red grapes	Sea Cucumber
Soybeans	Tomatoes	Tuna (light)	Turmeric			

Nutrients to Consider Adding to Your Diet:

Some nutrients are available in foods and some must be taken from a bottle. Either way, it is important to make informed decisions. Keep in mind that each doctor has his or her own theory on whether or not good-quality nutritional supplements could have a beneficial effect on health promotion and cancer prevention. Be forewarned and keep in mind that the pharmaceutical industry is a major contributor to medical schools. To get you started, here is a list of nutrients and/or supplements which research has demonstrated multiple cancer preventive effects:

Acetylsalicylic acid (aspirin)	Caffeic acid (found in coffee)	Calcium	Coenzyme Q10 (CoQ10)
Conjugated Linoleic Acid	Curcumin	Fish Oil, Omega- Fats	Genistein (a soy isoflavone)
Grape seed extract	Green Tea polyphenols	Indole-3-Carbinol (I3C)	Lycopene
Melatonin	Metformin	N-acetylcysteine (NAC)	Pomegranate juice and extracts
Resveratrol	Selenium	Silibinin and silymarin	Quercetin
Soy	Sulforaphane	Tocotrienols	Vitamin D

The importance of speaking with a nutritionally-informed physician about what nutrients and supplements each person should or should not add to one's diet cannot be overemphasized, preferably after appropriate blood work. Ideally, every doctor would be practicing this type of medicine. Until then, it is important for each person to make informed healthcare choices for themselves and their family.

Let's Not Forget the Basics:

If you smoke, find a way to quit. If you overeat, learn how to eat healthy. If you are not sleeping between the hours of 10 pm – 6 am, try in your own way to get the sleep that your body needs. If you are not exercising, find one or more options that you can do at least 3-4 times per week. If you have too much stress, find a way to effectively address it. Nitrates should be avoided as well. For those 21 and over, limit alcohol to one drink per night at the most. Drinking more than that puts a person at risk of cancer and other health concerns. Following these guidelines might not only help you look better but may just help you to feel better also.

Sources Used:

As with most other health topics, there is a lot to learn and know. Listed below are some links used:

(A) <http://www.lef.org/> (November 2012 issue)

(B) <http://www.chicagonow.com/katalin-fitness-health-driven/2012/04/prevent-cancer-foods-to-prevent-cancer/#image/1>

(C) <http://www.webnat.com/articles/FeminineHealth.asp>

(D) <http://articles.mercola.com/sites/articles/archive/2012/01/14/dr-christine-horner-interview.aspx>

(E) http://www.thepreventionsocialworker.org/uploads/MBSH_-_Article_6_-_Eliminating_BPA_.pdf

(F) http://www.thepreventionsocialworker.org/uploads/Article_24b_Knowing_About_Grains_Is_Critical_To_Your_Health_October_2011.pdf

Disclaimer for this article and all others written by Laura Jimenez, MSW for MBSH: These articles are intended as a reference only. The information provided is designed to save and improve lives by helping others to make informed decisions about health issues. It is not intended as a substitute for any treatment that has been doctor prescribed. If anyone reading this article suspects a medical problem, please seek competent medical care in a timely fashion.

(Last updated: 10/23/12)