Living Well after Cancer
Healthy life resources for the cancer community

Tonight:
“Healthy Eating” with Diane B. Wilson, EdD, RD
“Yoga” with Mary Shall, PhD, PT
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1 in 2 men
1 in 3 women will be diagnosed with cancer in their lifetimes.
Optimizing the health benefits of healthy eating and preventing weight gain: What the science says

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Cancer rates, overall, are slightly decreasing in the US...
Lung cancer death rates are still climbing in women, but death rates for cancers of the breast, prostate, colon, and (in men) lung are lower than in recent years. Of course, lung cancer still kills 80 out of every 100,000 men, a rate that’s nearly double that for women.

Source: American Cancer Society.
Cancer risk factors

- Age
- Family history
- Chemical exposures

Non-modifiable
- BMI (over 25kg/m²)
- Sedentary behavior
- Meat consumption
- Alcohol intake
- Tobacco use

Modifiable
Estimated proportion of cancer in the U.S. that could have been avoided by changes in each category of nongenetic cancer causes.

Causes of Cancer

- Tobacco
- Alcohol
- Overweight
- Physical Inactivity
- Diet
- Environment
- Medication
- Infection
- Sun & radiation
- Reproductive factors
- Family history

Wolin K Y et al. The Oncologist 2010;15:556-565
Modifiable factors

Body Mass Index (BMI) Wt (kg)/Ht (m^2)

- normal: 18-24.9
- overweight: 25-29.9
- obese: 30-39.9
- morbidly obese: >40
Overweight and Breast Cancer

• Women who are overweight are more likely to:
  – Develop breast cancer
  – Be less sensitive to breast cancer therapies
  – Have shorter survival time, after diagnosis
  – Have higher mortality rates
As a woman’s BMI rises above the normal range (18.5 to 24.9), her risk of dying of breast, kidney, uterine, and several other cancers also rises. For example, the risk of dying of breast cancer is 34 percent higher for women who are overweight (a BMI between 25.0 and 29.9) than for women who are normal-weight. For the most obese women (a BMI of 40 or higher), the risk of dying of breast cancer is double, the risk of kidney cancer is nearly five times higher, and the risk of uterine cancer is six times higher.

Americans are confused...
Meat Intake

• Red meat
  – Contains substances that are linked to colon and potentially other cancers
  – Heme iron is linked to changes in the lining of the colon

• Processed meat
  – Smoking, curing, or salting of meat contributes to carcinogenic substances

• **AICR Recommendation**: Consume no more than 18 ounces of red meat/week. Consume processed meat only occasionally
Alcohol and Breast Cancer Risk

- Epidemiologic studies show that heavy drinking can increase the risk of liver, head and neck, and esophageal cancer and more recently, the risk of breast cancer.

- Alcohol has been shown to be protective against heart disease.

“Drinking alcohol is an entirely avoidable risk factor for women with established risks like a family history of breast cancer”  
Dr. Arthur Schatzkin, Chief of Nutrition Epidemiology at the National Cancer Institute
Recommendation on alcohol intake for cancer risk reduction

For maximum cancer prevention, the American Institute for Cancer Research (AICR) recommends not consuming alcohol. However, if you consume alcohol, limit your intake to 1 drink/day on any days you consume alcohol, for women (2 drinks/day for men). Risk of breast cancer increases at any level higher than this.

One drink contains 1/3-1/2 oz. pure alcohol
- 12 oz. beer
- 1.5 oz hard liquor (Vodka or Whiskey)
- 5 oz. wine

What about cardiovascular recommendations?
Of all the health behaviors that one can choose to improve their health, exercise has the greatest overall benefit physiologically and psychologically because it is systemic.
ACS Guidelines for Exercise

• Adults- Engage in at least 30 minutes of moderate to vigorous physical activity, above usual activities, on 5 or more days of the week, 45-60 minutes are preferable

• Children and teens-Engage in at least 60 minutes/day of moderate to vigorous physical activity at least 5 days/week

• American Cancer Society-www.cancer.org
What to eat?

• Emphasize plant based foods
• Eat 5-10 servings of fruits/vegetables daily
  chemo preventive constituents
  fiber
  antioxidants
• Eat less red-meat
  – Select more chicken
  – Red meat-18 oz or less/week
  – Eat more fish
• Choose whole grains
• Do not eliminate dairy products
  – Milk is the highest natural food source of calcium and vitamin D
Five foods to avoid for cancer risk reduction

- **Hot dogs**
  - High levels of nitrates

- **Other processed meats and bacon**
  - Nitrates and saturated fat

- **Doughnuts**
  - Made with white flour, sugar and hydrogenated oils. Fried at high temperatures.

- **French Fries**
  - Contain acrylamides

- **Chips, crackers and cookies**
  - Many still contain trans-fats
Top recommended foods

- Berries-ellagic acid
- Cruciferous vegetables-antioxidants
- Tomatoes-lycopene
- Acorn Squash-beta carotene, fiber
- Sweet Potato-beta carotene, vitamin A
- Whole wheat products-anti-cancer agents and fiber
- Nuts-omega 3 fatty acids, protein
- Salmon-omega 3 fatty acids, protein, low fat
- Greek Yogurt-high protein, calcium and vitamin D
- Chicken-equal protein but lower fat and calories than red meat

From the office of Dr. Diane Wilson
Other research findings on nutrition and cancer risk

Fat
- Some studies show a relationship between lower fat intake and higher survival from breast cancer

Fiber
- Lack of dietary fiber appears to be related to increased risk of colon cancer

Green Tea
- Contains substances that seem to be protective against some cancers

Soy
- At high levels of intake, soy may stimulate tumor growth so be moderate with your intake of soy products. Do not take soy powders.

Water
- More study needed on pharmaceuticals
Dietary Supplements

- No supplements have proven benefits on cancer-prevention or cancer related outcomes.
- Vitamin and herbal supplements ARE NOT regulated by the FDA—what the label says may not be what you consume.
- Refer to responsible sources of information, i.e., National Center for Complementary & Alternative Medicine (http://nccam.nih.gov)
- Rely on food as your main source of nutrients!!

40-50% of individual’s diagnosed with cancer begin using additional supplements after diagnosis.
Eating patterns: We know what to do, why don’t we do it?

• Eating to fill empty spaces
• Eat breakfast
• Establish routine eating times
• Dinner with family
  – Message sent to children
• Mothers’ roles
“Nutrition and exercise are some of the most significant determinants of health and the most modifiable.”

US Surgeon General
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