



Top 5 diet tips for breast cancer prevention

October is Breast Cancer Awareness month so we are sharing some basic strategies for optimizing the quality of your diet for cancer prevention.

Plant-forward

Whole plant foods are superior sources of fiber, antioxidants, and phytochemicals that protect your cells against all types of cancer. Focus on single-ingredient foods over packaged, processed foods. Select whole over refined grains whenever possible, and incorporate more nuts, seeds, and beans. Last but not least, strive for at least 6-9 servings from a variety of brightly colored fruits and vegetables daily. A “serving,” not necessarily a “portion,” to guide you in your 6-9 goal is:

- 1 medium handheld fruit
- ½ cup sliced fruit
- ½ cup chopped raw or cooked veggies
- 1 cup raw leafy greens or large cooked pieces of vegetables

Big salads, green smoothies, veggie-based soups, and snacks are great ways to get in more produce at every eating occasion.

The great fat swap

Multiple studies show that limiting saturated fats such as from foods like butter, full-fat dairy products like cheese and cream, poultry skin, fatty and processed meats, and hydrogenated or hyper-processed oils can significantly cut breast cancer risk. To maximize the benefit, include healthful fats from avocados, olive oil, nuts, seeds, and fatty fish.

Limit alcohol

A recent report from the World Health Organization warns that there is “no safe level of alcohol consumption” and “the risk of breast cancer increases with each unit of alcohol per day.” While it might not be reasonable for everyone to ditch booze completely, it is worth limiting intake. If a daily drink (or more) is a habit for you, try sipping water or seltzer instead, from the same glass.

Less added sugar

Any cancer prevention diet will always limit concentrated sweets, added sugar from processed foods, and sugary beverages. While a direct link has not been established, there may be indirect consequences. For example, added sugar stimulates the insulin response, leading to hormonal changes that may accelerate cancer cell growth. Furthermore, diets high in concentrated sweets and processed sugary foods tend to displace protective, more healthful foods.

Healthy weight

Being overweight is a risk factor for breast cancer. In addition to making the dietary changes suggested above, certain habits will encourage healthy behaviors and mindful eating that help manage weight.

Kale Pomegranate Walnut Salad



This week's recipe is colorful, delicious, easy to make, and packed with protective nutrients and fiber. It features pomegranate, a bright red fruit filled with juicy, pulpy, edible seeds (the seeds are the only edible part of the fruit) that is in season now. It is an excellent source of fiber, antioxidants, and vitamin C. You can pop the seeds out of a store-bought pomegranate or buy the seeds ready to go. Make this recipe soon, as the pomegranate season is short (September through December)!

You will need:

- 1 tbsp fresh squeezed lemon juice
- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- ½ teaspoon salt
- 10-12 ounces of baby kale*
- 1 cup pomegranate seeds (about one large pomegranate's worth)
- ¾ cup roughly chopped walnuts (lightly toasted is nice but not necessary)

*If you use regular (large leaf) kale, you can tenderize the leaves by massaging them with your olive oil-dipped fingers. Apply a small amount of olive oil on your fingertips, rub the leaves for a few seconds, chop roughly, and follow the recipe. The leaves will become more tender and easier to chew, and more flavorful as well.

Instructions:

Whisk together the lemon juice, olive oil, and salt. Set aside.

Toss remaining ingredients together, add the dressing and toss to coat, and enjoy!