

*Good advice by Dr.
Harold*

Avoiding Cancer by Eating the Right Foods



If we knew that certain foods cause cancer and others prevent, we would be wiser, and the incidence of cancer among us would have been much reduced. Unfortunately, only in our old age we are told about these discoveries. Nevertheless, you still have hope and this article will benefit you. You may be having a history of cancer in the family, or a loved one may be battling with the disease. Whatever the situation, your dietary choices do matter. Some foods actually increase your risk of cancer, while others support your body and strengthen your immune system.

We are all aware that the majority of cancers are linked to lifestyle choices such as smoking, drinking excessively, lack of exercise and unhealthy diets. Avoiding cigarettes, minimizing alcohol and exercising regularly make a good anti-cancer start.

It is observed that those who consume plant-based diets can fight against cancer much better than the non-fibre meat eaters. Vegetarians seems to have less risk of having cancer but seems to have a higher risk of Colo-rectal cancer.

All the evidence points to a low-fat, high-fiber **diet** that includes a variety of fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and beans, as being the best for **cancer prevention**. **Vegetarians**, whose **diets** easily meet these requirements, are at the lowest risk for **cancer**.

Such diets include a variety of vegetables, fruits and whole grains and seeds. They should be less processed, less they have been cooked, less peeled, less mixed with other ingredients, the chances of having better nutrient and better chance of fighting against cancer. Always choose "whole" foods which are close to their original form.

- Consume food with much fibre.
- Use brown rice instead of white rice
- Substitute whole grain bread for white bread
- Eat fresh fruits such as a pear, a banana, or an apple with the intact skin.

- Buy organic products, if possible not been treated with chemicals. They contain no pesticides which may be carcinogenic.

High fibre foods

Consume food always with high content of fibre, roughage and bulk as in grains, fruits and vegetables, the gut cannot digest. Fibre keeps your bowels clean and healthy. There is no fibre in meat, dairy, sugar or 'white' foods like white bread, white rice, and pastries. Eat plenty of legumes such as lentils, black beans, peas, baked beans, kidney beans.

Fibre content is high in broccoli, spinach, dark green leafy vegetables, peas, corn, tomatoes, Brussels sprouts and potatoes.

Garlic, Onions stimulates enzymes that suppress tumor growth.

Avoid red meats, hydrogenated oils like margarine, deep fried foods.

The fat in animal foods can increase hormone levels in the blood, and the pesticides and hormones found in some of these foods may also fuel cancer growth. Animal foods are devoid of fibre, and low fibre diets are associated with a higher risk of cancer.

Eating plant foods increase your antioxidants in the body to fight diseases and early cancer. New research has shown that plants may protect us from cancer in a far more novel way and they block a cancer's ability to grow via a process known as *angiogenesis*.

Angiogenesis means growth of new blood vessels. In healthy people angiogenesis is finely regulated where blood vessels growth is limited when not further required. If the process of angiogenesis goes out of control, as in cancer growths, the growths tend to be well fed and therapy may not work. We are supposed to harbor cancer cells in small numbers during our healthy life time. Inherent immune system generally retards multiplication of these abnormal cells in the body. With increased angiogenesis these abnormal cells may start multiplying and spreading the growth from a dormant state. Cancer cells seem to produce chemicals that initiate angiogenesis to feed themselves. With chemotherapy angiogenesis is prevented by chemically destroying the cancer growth. Researchers have developed some drugs that can help to shrink tumour growths by inhibiting angiogenesis. More research work may be needed to fine tune these projects.

Scientists like Dr William Li, a researcher who heads the Angiogenesis Foundation in Cambridge, Massachusetts, are looking at the power of certain foods to block angiogenesis.

These foods include fruits like apples, oranges, blackberries, blueberries and raspberries; vegetables like kale, bok choy, tomatoes, artichokes, pumpkins and

maitake mushrooms; legumes like soybeans; spices and herbs like turmeric, nutmeg, garlic and parsley; fish such as tuna; and finally red wine and chocolate.

One could explain why there is an increase incident of cancer among those people who eat less fruits and vegetables intake, and eat burghers and fries containing too much fat and chemicals in such foods. Cancer can be prevented by eating more of healthy natural foods.

Many studies indicate that fat in foods increases one's risk for cancer, and it may also adversely affect breast cancer survival rates for those who have cancer.⁷

In 2004, **Diet, Nutrition and the Prevention of Cancer** was published in the journal Public Health Nutrition. Two of the authors, Timothy Key and Naomi Allen, have been involved in many of the above studies. Walter Willett of the Harvard School of Public Health also co-authored this paper which reviews what is currently known about diet and cancer. They summarize their findings based on levels of evidence:

Convincing Evidence

- Physical activity lowers the risk of colon cancer, and breast cancer.
- Being overweight increases the risk of esophagus, colorectal, endometrium, and kidney cancer. It also increases the risk of breast cancer in postmenopausal women.
- Alcohol increases the risk of oral cavity, pharynx, larynx, esophagus, liver, and breast cancer.
- Aflatoxin is a mold that contaminates some foods, especially in underdeveloped countries; it increases liver cancer in areas rampant with the hepatitis virus.
- Chinese-style salted fish increases risk of nasopharynx cancer.
- Salt preserved foods and salt increase the risk for stomach cancer.

Up to 35 per cent of cancers may be caused by poor diet, and cancer risk is also much higher among people who are obese.

Eating meat

Meat has been suspected of influencing the risk for several types of cancer. For example, in the systematic review by the WCRF/AICR (World Cancer Research Fund/American Institute for Cancer Research), an expert panel concluded that both red meat and processed meat are convincing causes of colorectal cancer, and that there was some evidence suggesting that high intakes of red or



processed meat increased the risk for cancers of the oesophagus, stomach, pancreas, lung, endometrium and prostate.

Most studies have shown the incidence of stomach cancer is very low among the vegetarians. Processed meat may increase the risk of stomach cancer, perhaps due to presence of *N*-nitroso compounds. Therefore, it is plausible that a meat-free diet could be associated with a reduction in the risk for stomach cancer. There is also some evidence that a high intake of fruit and vegetables might reduce the risk for stomach cancer,

Eating Fish

The incidence of all malignant neoplasms combined may be lower among both fish eaters and vegetarians than among meat eaters. It has been reported that the incidence of cancer of the lymphatic and haematopoietic tissues were the lowest among vegetarians.

Cancer in India

In India rates of oral and oesophageal cancers are some of the highest in the world, according to a report by Sinha R Anderson et al. National Cancer Institute, Maryland, USA. In contrast the rates for colorectal, prostate and lung cancers are one of the lowest. These figures were raised after Indians migrated to their adopted Western countries. Change of diet is among the factors that may be responsible for the changing disease rates. Of particular interest for cancer prevention is the role of turmeric, an ingredient in common Indian curry spice. Researches also have investigated cumin, chillies and other plant seeds for their apparent cancer preventive properties.

Eating burnt toast

Some chemicals in burnt toast have been linked to cancer. The most well-known chemical in toast is acrylamide, which is produced when sugars and certain amino acids are heated together during cooking process.

This potentially harmful chemical is mainly found in starchy foods such as potatoes (French fries and other potato products), along with baked goods, including bread and, of course, toast.

While toast contains less acrylamide than potato chips and fries, work by FSANZ in 2004 found that toasted white bread is one of the main food sources of acrylamide in the Australian population. This is because we eat more white bread than brown, but white bread might also have slightly more acrylamide in it than other types of bread.

Always scrape off the crust and carbon that contains the acrylamide off the toast as a precaution.

Acrylamide is also used in many industrial processes (paper and plastic production for instance) and at high levels of exposure, it is known to be toxic to the nervous systems of animals and humans

So next time you see smoke coming out when you toast your slice of bread, think of the harm that would result in eating toasted foods. Burnt toes also contain small amount of polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons (PAHs), they are considered pollutants and some contain carcinogenic chemicals causing or aggravating cancer.

FDA has warned the cancerous properties of acrylamide.

There is insufficient evidence that animal fats, heterocyclic amines, polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons, and nitrosamines increase the risk of cancer.

Bottom line is fight cancer with food: Eat a wide variety of fruits and veggies every day, throw in some spices like turmeric and garlic, trade in your steak for a veggie burger, and enjoy a glass of red wine now and then. Eat any form of meat ones a week.

Hope reading this article will motivate you to select your daily foods to minimize the risk of food related cancer.