

4

Eat a Healthy Diet

Here are four healthy diet principles to reduce your cancer risk:

- Eat plenty of fresh, ripe, locally grown, organic fruits and vegetables, whenever possible. Raw or lightly steamed veggies are more nutritious than cooked; fresh is better than frozen; frozen is better than from cans, which may have hormone disruptors in their plastic lining.
- Drink generous quantities of healthy liquids, including pure water cleansed of chlorine residues and other contaminants, various teas, such as green, Chai, white and rooibos,¹ and freshly juiced fruits and vegetables.
- Start your cancer prevention diet in the womb. No kidding. If your mother ate nutritious food while you were *in utero* and breastfed you for at least six months, you really did get a head start on reduced risk for cancer later in life. The good news: *From a cancer prevention standpoint, it's never too late to improve your diet.*
- Take good quality food supplements, including vitamins, minerals and other elements that build immunity, such as salvestrols and precursors to glutathione, a known anti-cancer agent. We *should* be able to get everything a healthy body needs from our meal plates, but too much North American food is sadly lacking in nutrients because of the harmful effects of modern farming and food processing practices (see p. 40).

Are you skeptical about organic food? Think it's too expensive, hard to get, or no more

Populations around the world that practice a very low-fat vegetarian diet, in general, have the lowest rates of cancer.

— Hans Diehl, *Diet for a New Century*

nutritious or safe than non-organic food? Then consider these points:

- Cost: *Mothers and Others for a Livable Planet* demonstrated in a shopping basket comparison that, with modest adjustments in buying habits, the cost of organic food was about equal to the cost of food treated with pesticides and grown with chemical fertilizers. The two key changes? Buying in bulk and substituting vegetable proteins for most meats.
- Food value: Many studies have shown the nutritional superiority of organic over non-organic crops. A 2001 literature survey by Virginia Worthington found that organic crops contained “significantly more vitamin C, iron, magnesium and phosphorus, and significantly less nitrates than conventional crops.”^{2, 3}
- Pesticide residues: Do they cause cancer? Dr. Charles Benbrook, Chief Scientist at The Organic Center, says one third of the population is vulnerable.⁴ In a 2001 study of 96 children in the Seattle area, only one child showed no measurable concentration of any of the organophosphorus metabolites from pesticides. This child's parents bought exclusively organic produce and did not use any pesticides at home.⁵
- Supplements: The American Medical Association used to believe it was unnecessary for North Americans to take vitamins. But in 2002, this mainstream doctors' group concluded: “Pending strong evidence of effectiveness from randomized trials, it

Fruits and vegetables contain thousands of phytochemicals, and many are powerful anti-cancer agents. Organic produce is best.



JULIAN ROUMANNI, DREAMSTIME.COM

appears prudent for all adults to take vitamin supplements.”⁶

Ten Foods and Drinks to Limit or Eliminate

- All charred foods, which create *heterocyclic aromatic amines*, known carcinogens. Even dark toast is suspect.
- Well-done red meat.⁷ Medium or rare is better, little or no red meat is best.
- Sugar, both white and brown (which is simply white sugar with molasses added).⁸
- Heavily salted, smoked and pickled foods, which lead to higher rates of stomach cancer.
- Sodas/soft drinks, which pose health risks, both for what they contain — sugar and various additives — and for what they replace in the diet — beverages and foods that provide vitamins, minerals, and other nutrients.⁹
- French fries, chips and snack foods that contain trans fats.¹⁰
- Some food and drink additives, including aspartame.
- Excess alcohol. (See Solution 2)
- Baked goods, for the *acrylamide*.
- Farmed fish, which contains higher levels of toxins such as PCBs.
- Globe artichoke for very high levels of *salvestrols*.¹¹
- Dark greens, such as spinach and romaine lettuce, for their *fiber*, *folate* and a wide range of cancer-fighting *carotenoids*. Other dark-colored veggies, too, such as beets and red cabbage.
- Grapes and red wine, especially for the *resveratrol*.¹²
- Legumes — beans, peas and lentils, for the *saponins*, *protease inhibitors* and more.
- Berries, particularly blueberries, for the *ellagic acid* and *anthocyanosides*.
- Flaxseed, especially if you grind it yourself and consume when fresh, for the essential fatty acid *alpha-linolenic acid*, *lignans* and other “good fats.”¹³
- Garlic, onions, scallions, leeks and chives, for many anti-cancer substances including *allicin*.
- Green tea, for its anti-cancer *catechins*, a potent anti-oxidant.
- Tomatoes, for the famous flavenoid *lycopene*.

Ten Foods and Drinks for Cancer Protection

- Cruciferous vegetables: broccoli, cauliflower, cabbage, Brussels sprouts, bok choy and kale. These score high for containing many anti-cancer substances, such as the *isothiocyanates*.

- Fats and Cholesterol:
www.hsph.harvard.edu/nutritionsource/fats.html
- *The Food Revolution: How Your Diet Can Help Save Your Life and the World*, John Robbins. Conari, 2001:
www.foodrevolution.org
- *Foods That Fight Cancer: Preventing Cancer Through Diet*, Richard Béliveau and Denis Gingras, McClelland & Stewart, 2006
- Guide to Food Additives:
www.cspinet.org/reports/chemcuisine.htm