

PROSTATE CANCER
Dietary information

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Introduction

It is thought that diet may be an important environmental factor in the development of prostate cancer. The most simple message for prostate cancer patients is “what’s good for your heart, is good for your prostate”

1. Cut down on meat

Try to eat meat no more than three times a week. It is best to eat white meat and lean cuts of red meat with equal portions of fish.

Why? Anecdotal evidence suggests that a diet low in meat (animal fat) can substantially reduce your risk. A vegetarian diet halves the lifetime risk of contracting prostate cancer compared to meat-eaters, lowering it from 1:12 to 1:24.

Animals have increasingly been fed hormones and other chemicals to help their growth and prevent disease. Prostate cancer - a hormone-based disease - may be strongly linked to the consumption of meat, which contains higher levels of hormone-disrupting chemicals.

2. Cut down on fatty foods

Cut down on saturated dairy and animal fats and substitute olive oil and mono-unsaturated fats.

Try not to fry food

If you are over-weight, try to start a diet to reduce your risk.

Why? Diets that are high in dairy products - mild cheese, butter and saturated animal fats - are also associated with a higher incidence of prostate cancer. Dietary fat can affect the levels of testosterone in men's bodies and since testosterone feeds prostate cancers, there may well be a link between the two. Vegans who shun both meat and dairy produce seem to enjoy the lowest risks.

Lower fat can enhance the immune system and boost red blood cells, which destroy cancer cells.

3. Eat more fruit and vegetables

Try to eat five to nine servings of fresh fruit and vegetables daily.

Eat plenty of rich red tomato sauces, and try to include soy in your diet, (soya milk, and tofu or soya yoghurts).

- *Vitamin C* - Citrus, peppers and green leafy vegetables.
- *Vitamin D* - Fish, liver, oils, egg yolk and fortified milk.
- *Vitamin E* - Spinach, apples and seeds.
- *Beta-Carotene* - Carrots, cantaloupe melons and dark green leafy vegetables.
- *Zinc* - Oysters, herrings, oatmeal and soybeans.
- *Selenium* - Brazil nuts, avocados and lentils.

Why? These are all high in anti-oxidants, which protect our cells against the damaging effects of oxidant chemicals and can help prevent cancers. The most well known anti-oxidants include Vitamins C, E and Beta-carotene - the plant equivalent of Vitamin A.

Researchers have linked Vitamin D levels with exposure to ultra-violet sunlight and found that prostate cancer deaths are highest in northern countries where exposure to UV sunlight is lower.

Soya contains important isoflavonoids, which inhibit prostate cancer cell growth. Vegetables such as broccoli, cauliflower and Brussels sprouts contain a chemical called Sulforaphane, which may have anti-cancer properties.

Increase your fibre intake - the more you eat the greater the ability for it to bind to oestrogen and testosterone reducing the amount of

hormones in the body and possibly reducing the risks of prostate cancer.

A recent discovery is Lycopene, an anti-oxidant found in processed tomatoes that give them their red colour. Studies show that men who eat the most processed tomatoes (e.g. on pizza toppings and pasta sauces) were less likely to develop prostate cancer.

A healthy prostate contains higher levels of Zinc than any other organ because it is needed to produce male hormones. Zinc also protects against damaging toxic effects of everyday life.

4. Vitamins

The following vitamins **may** have some role in the protection against prostate cancer.

<i>Vitamin C</i>	<i>BETA-Carotene</i>
<i>Vitamin D</i>	<i>Selenium</i>
<i>Vitamin E</i>	<i>Zinc</i>

A healthy balanced diet will furnish adequate amounts of all vitamins except vitamin D. Vitamin D is produced in the skin by exposure to UV light, it is present in only very small amounts in natural foods.

Try to consume vitamin requirements in a natural way in the foods previously mentioned .

5. Stub them out!

- **STOP SMOKING!** This will also protect your zinc levels.
- Cut down on alcohol and coffee.

Why? Stopping smoking will prevent the development of many cancers.

There is some suggestion that cigarettes can increase your exposure to Cadmium and this does have a link with prostate cancer.

Smoking and drinking alcohol and coffee deplete zinc levels, which are important in protecting the prostate.

6. Exercise

Because very little research has been conducted into prostate cancer, the power of exercise, though known to be beneficial in boosting the body's immune system, is still largely uncertain.

What scientists do know is that exercise can prevent cancer because it enhances natural immunity by improving circulation, blood pressure and the efficiency and strength of the heart.

It also improves the anti-oxidant defences of our cells, which can help to counter the potentially damaging effects of oxidants, and which can lead to the genetic mutations that lie behind the development of cancers. Exercise also improves our energy balance and hormonal changes, making us less vulnerable to stresses and illness.

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