

Eating Guidelines for Cancer Prevention

Prostate Cancer

Eating well by following the suggestions from "Eating Guidelines for Cancer Prevention: Diet and Cancer Prevention Basics" is one of the main things you can do to lower your risk of cancer. In addition, certain foods may offer extra protection against prostate cancer. These include foods high in lycopene (lycopene is a substance naturally found in some red and pink fruits and vegetables) and foods containing selenium. Lentils, dried beans, soy foods and foods containing vitamin E may also help prevent prostate cancer. Diets high in calcium (more than 1500 mg daily) and eating processed meat may increase risk.

Men at risk for prostate cancer are also often concerned about their risk for other chronic conditions such as diabetes and heart disease. Fortunately, many of the healthy eating habits that promote overall health may also be good for the prostate. Men should follow a lower fat way of eating, including a wide variety of plant-based foods while achieving and maintaining a healthy weight.



Steps you can take

To decrease your risk of prostate cancer:

Follow the suggestions from the handout "Eating Guidelines for Cancer Prevention: Diet and Cancer Prevention Basics".

Eat foods rich in lycopene often. Include tomatoes (tomato paste, tomato sauce, cooked/canned tomato, tomato juice, fresh tomatoes), pink guava, watermelon and pink grapefruit. Your body can absorb the lycopene from cooked tomatoes better than from raw tomatoes.

Include foods high in selenium. Good food sources include brazil nuts, sunflower seeds, fish, shellfish and seafood, turkey, chicken, eggs, whole wheat grain products, couscous, and ricotta cheese.

Use lentils and dried beans and peas and soy foods regularly. Legumes are high in fibre and low in fat. They are a good substitute for meat, so can help you follow a more plant-based diet. Try soy beverage instead of milk and use legumes or tofu instead of beef or pork in stir-fries, casseroles and stews.

Choose foods that are rich in vitamin E. Good food sources include nuts and seeds (particularly sunflower seeds and almonds), vegetable oils, tomato sauce and dark green leafy vegetables.

Aim for the recommended amount of calcium each day, but not more. Some research suggests that diets high in calcium (more than 1500 milligrams (mg) daily) may increase prostate cancer risk. It is still very important that you get enough calcium everyday to keep your bones strong. Men aged 19-70 years should aim for 1000 mg of calcium daily and men over 70 should aim for 1200 mg daily. If you are over 50 and have osteopenia or osteoporosis you may need more calcium — talk with your doctor or a dietitian.

Take supplements cautiously. Specific vitamin and/or mineral supplements may be recommended at different stages in life or if your food choices are limited. But at this time no specific supplements are recommended to help prevent prostate cancer. Although it may turn out that certain supplements help some people, the same supplements may be harmful for others. "SELECT", a large prostate cancer prevention study was stopped because it didn't find selenium or vitamin E supplements helped prevent prostate cancer. Early results also started to suggest that vitamin E supplements may slightly increase the chance of getting prostate cancer, and that selenium supplements may increase the chance of getting diabetes. More research is needed to find out if these findings are correct, and to find out the effect of other dietary supplements.

If you still have questions about dietary supplements and cancer prevention see Eating Guidelines for Cancer Prevention - Dietary Supplements or speak with your doctor or a registered dietitian.

Eat a variety of foods. At this time the link between other foods (such as dark chocolate, pomegranate juice, flaxseeds or green tea) and prostate cancer risk is not clear. You can include different and new

foods as part of a varied diet. This will help you get a variety of nutrients and lessen the chance of having unhealthy effects from eating too much of any one food.



Additional Resources

- Canadian Cancer Society www.cancer.ca
- American Institute of Cancer Research www.aicr.org

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Notes

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