



Create Your Own Reality painting graciously donated by Melissa Harris (melissaharris.com)

Changes and choices **YOU** can make —
little by little, bit by bit, day by day, to create a
healthier environment, bolster your immune
system and reduce the risk of breast cancer.

Healthy Lifestyles

2015 Calendar

by Breast Cancer Options

*A not-for-profit organization dedicated to supplying
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BETTER SAFE THAN SORRY...Living the Precautionary Principle

In simple terms, the precautionary principle says “an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure.” It’s common sense and it guides us to take action, as individuals and as a society, to prevent harm to human health and the environment before it happens.

While it is difficult to know the exact role toxins play in determining our health, the depth of their impact on our health becomes clearer every day. The precautionary principle is a tool to help us make better health and environmental decisions. It aims to prevent harm from the outset rather than manage it after the fact. New technologies can bring great benefits, but they can also cause accidental harm

Ingredients in personal care and household products can mimic the effects of the hormone estrogen. Scientists are concerned that even at low levels, these environmental estrogens may work together with the body’s own estrogen to increase the risk of breast cancer and other diseases.

These compounds are found all around us. We eat them, drink them, breathe them and use them at work, at home and in the garden. Man-made EMFs—those emanating from our electricity, power lines, cell phones and WiFi disrupt our hormonal balance. Young children, who are still developing, are especially at risk from repeated environmental exposures.

Only about 10% of breast cancers are due to hereditary factors and only a total of 25-40% are due to any known risk factors. Reasons for the other 60-75% remain unclear but are likely due to preventable factors that should be studied. The precautionary principle holds that safety tests should be held in laboratories, not in our bodies.

Some Facts:

- * We don’t know how to prevent breast cancer.
- * Today, breast cancer is the most prevalent type of cancer in women and the leading cause of cancer deaths among women aged 40 to 55.
- * Despite better treatments and increased access to care for many women, 40,000 women still die from the disease each year.
- * In the 1960s, a woman’s lifetime risk for breast cancer was 1 in 20. Today it is 1 in 8.
- * Only 5% to 10% of breast cancers occur in women with a genetic predisposition for the disease. We cannot explain why the remaining 90% occurs.
- * When breast cancer shows up on a mammogram, it may have been in your body for 6-10 years
- * The research in the fight against breast cancer focuses on treatment and a cure. The National Cancer Institute spends \$600 million on breast cancer research. Only five % of the money is allocated for cancer prevention and only three % is allocated for investigations into environmental causes.
- * A study of newborns done by the Environmental Working Group (EWG) detected 287 chemicals in umbilical cord blood. We know that 180 cause cancer in humans or animals, 217 are toxic to the brain and nervous system, and 208 cause birth defects or abnormal development in animal tests. The dangers of pre- or post-natal exposure to this complex mixture of carcinogens, developmental toxins and neurotoxins have never been studied. Scientists had previously thought that the placenta protected developing baby from chemicals and pollutants in the environment.

Become an informed consumer. Learn how to take care of yourself. Look around your environment. Learn how to read product labels. Part of lowering your risk means being responsible for your health and your health choices: eating a good diet, learning how to deal with stress, integrating exercise into your life, identifying environmental risks factors and advocating for what you believe.

*Let the Precautionary Principle guide you—Help us stop breast cancer before it starts.
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cancer are more
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* Paik et al. / Clin Oncol. 2006

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January

S	M	T	W	T	F	S	
				New Year's Day	1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
11	12	13	14	15	16	17	
18	Martin Luther King	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31	



BREAST CANCER RISK FACTORS

Some women will develop breast cancer even without any known risk factors. Having a risk factor does not mean you will get the disease, and not all risk factors affect your risk to the same extent. Most women have some risk factors and most women do not get breast cancer. Most types of breast cancer are estrogen-related. This is why many of the risk factors we can control involve keeping your estrogen levels low

Risk Factors For Breast Cancer You Can Control

Obesity: Fat cells in the body store high levels of estrogen, which increase the threat of breast cancer. Maintaining a normal body weight is crucial component in decreasing your risk.

Poor diet: People who have a poor diet are at increased risk of several types of cancer. Eat fruits, vegetables, complex carbohydrates and organic protein.

Lack of physical activity: Physical inactivity is a risk factor for breast cancer. 30 minutes of moderate physical activity per day can decrease your body fat percentage and the amount of estrogen in your body. It strengthens your immune system and enhances your body's ability to recognize and eliminate early cancer cells.

Environment: The environment around you may contain harmful chemicals that can increase your risk of cancer. Chemicals and personal care products in your home or workplace also are associated with an increased risk of cancer.

Light at Night and Electromagnetic Radiation: Light at night and electromagnetic radiation from cell phones, computers and other electronic devices disrupts the natural sleep/wake pattern and lowers levels of the tumor-fighting hormone melatonin. *Sleep in darkness and at least 3-5 feet away from devices and outlets.*

Cell phone radiation: Cell phones are two-way microwave radios that the soft fatty tissue of the breast readily absorbs. Reports are accumulating of young women with no history of breast cancer getting diagnosed after storing their cell phones on their breast. *Cell phones should NOT be kept directly on the body and women should NOT store their cell phones in their bra.*

Exposure to ionizing radiation: CT scans, X-rays, or mammograms—can increase the risk of breast and other cancers.

Alcohol: Studies show that drinking alcohol—even just one drink per day—increases your risk for breast cancer.

Smoking: Smoking exposes the body to carcinogens and accelerates tumor growth. Studies indicate that people who smoke during their teen years greatly increase their risk for breast and other cancers compared to people who don't.

Stress: Stress impacts our immune systems and decreases the body's ability to fight disease. The immune system loses the ability to kill cancer cells and may facilitate cancer spread. Psychological stress is linked to breast cancer aggressiveness.

Risk Factors For Breast Cancer You Cannot Control

Age: Your risk of developing breast cancer increases as you get older. This is due to an accumulation of damage to cells over time.

Family history of breast cancer: Breast cancer risk is higher among women whose close blood relatives have this disease. Having one first-degree relative (mother, sister, or daughter) with breast cancer approximately doubles a woman's risk. Having 2 first-degree relatives increases her risk about 3-fold.

Gender: Simply being a woman is the main risk factor for developing breast cancer. Men can develop breast cancer, but this disease is about 100 times more common among women than men.

Genetic risk factors: Only 5% to 10% of breast cancer cases are inherited, resulting from inherited genetic cell mutations. The most common cause of hereditary breast cancer is an inherited mutation in the *BRCA1* and *BRCA2* genes. In normal cells, these genes help prevent cancer by making proteins that keep the cells from growing abnormally. The average lifetime risk in some families with *BRCA1* mutations is 55-65% but can go as high as 80%. The risk for *BRCA2* mutations is around 45%.

Race and ethnicity: White women are slightly more likely to develop breast cancer than are African-American women, but African-American women are more likely to die of this cancer. However, in women under 45 years of age, breast cancer is more common in African-American women.

Having children: Women who have had no children or who had their first child after age 30 have a slightly higher breast cancer risk overall. Having many pregnancies and becoming pregnant at a young age reduce breast cancer risk.

Exposure to estrogen. The female hormone estrogen stimulates breast cell growth and exposure to estrogen over long periods of time, without any breaks, can increase the risk of breast cancer. Having Menstrual periods before 12 and after 55 increases your lifetime exposure.

Personal History of breast cancer or non-cancerous breast diseases.

Radiation to chest for Hodgkin's Lymphoma as a child or young adult: This treatment for another cancer significantly increases breast cancer risk.

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THERMOGRAPHY

February

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	Valentine's Day 14
15	President's Day 16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28



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Resources

Omega Institute
www.eomega.org
United Breast Cancer Foundation
www.ubcf.info

Using Complementary Therapies With Conventional Treatments

The terms “complementary medicine” and “alternative medicine” often are used interchangeably. However, though they sometimes refer to the same modalities, the two are very different.

Complementary medicine is used together with traditional Western medicine. Alternative medicine is used in place of conventional medicine. Many patients use both conventional treatments and complementary therapies. There is no scientific evidence that any complementary therapy can cure cancer but they can help with side effects and optimize immune function. Complementary therapies work best as part of your total treatment plan, combined with conventional medical treatments. They focus on areas often neglected by conventional medicine that may improve overall health and survival.

COMPLEMENTARY THERAPIES CAN:

- * Help you feel better and improve your quality of life
- * Improve your general health and immunity
- * Give you a sense of control over what is happening
- * Reduce stress, tension, sleeplessness, anxiety and depression and make you feel more relaxed
- * Help reduce the symptoms of cancer, such as pain, feeling sick, breathlessness, constipation, diarrhea, tiredness and poor appetite
- * Help reduce the side effects of cancer treatment such as nausea, joint pain, fatigue, ‘chemo brain’, sexual side effects
- * Improve conventional treatment efficacy

QUESTIONS TO ASK:

- * Can the therapy interfere with conventional treatment?
- * What do you expect to gain from a complementary therapy?
- * How do you choose a complementary therapy?
- * How do you know if a therapy is working for you?
- * Is the therapy covered by insurance?
- * Is the therapy safe or can it cause harm or side effects?
- * Are there established standards for the therapy? Is the therapist qualified?
- * Has research been done about the effectiveness of the therapy?
- * Are there medical records or clinical trials offering scientific support of treatment?

How to know if a complementary therapy is working for you: Subjective VS. Objective

Subjective responses include improved energy, appetite and well-being. Do you feel any different?

Objective data would include testing to see if there is a change.

COMPLEMENTARY THERAPIES INCLUDE:

- * Medical systems: Traditional Chinese Medicine, Ayurveda, homeopathy, naturopathy
- * Mind-body interventions: biofeedback, hypnosis, meditation, yoga, guided imagery
- * Biologically based therapies: foods, vitamins, both herbal and nonherbal dietary supplements.
- * Manipulation and body-based methods: massage, chiropractic, osteopathy, Feldenkrais, Alexander Technique
- * Energy therapies: acupuncture, Reiki, magnets, therapeutic touch

AS WELL AS:

- * Dietary modification
- * Exercise (3-4 hours per week)
- * Sleep (at least 7-8 hours per night in darkness)
- * Elimination of hormone disrupting and toxic chemicals
- * Art or Music Therapy
- * Support groups/Counseling/Therapy

IN EVALUATING A THERAPY: Be open minded yet skeptical

- * ASK QUESTIONS and ALWAYS do your own research
- * Be cautiously open-minded
- * Learn about the potential risks and benefits
- * Look at the type and number of studies being done and the consistency of findings

TESTING BEFORE AND AFTER: There are a number of tests not normally done for routine cancer testing that may give a patient information on immune status, hormone balance, chemical exposures, and nutrient status. This is a way to evaluate if something is working for you.

YOU CAN TEST FOR: Vitamin D levels; Toxic exposures and chemicals; Hormonal Balance; Nutritional Status; Digestive Function, etc.

LABS THAT DO SPECIALIZED TESTING: AIT Laboratories - www.aitlabs.com; Genova Diagnostic/Metamatrix - www.gdx.net

RESEARCHING INFORMATION: There are millions of websites out there but anyone can set up a website and put up information that looks reliable. To distinguish between what is reliable information and what isn't, the information on a website should tell you the source. They may include a list of journal article references or links to the books they used.

USEFUL WEBSITES: Pubmed.gov; National Cancer Institute Complementary and Alternative Medicine: cancer.gov/cancertopics/cam

Before using any Complementary therapy, patients should talk with their doctors —to make sure that all aspects of their cancer care work together.

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March



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S	M	T	W	T	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Daylight Savings Begins Spring Forward 8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	St. Patrick's Day 17	18	19	20	21
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29	30	31				




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DIET: What To Eat And Why

It is thought that dietary factors account for 30-35% of all cancers; diet has surpassed tobacco as a preventable cause of cancer. **Recent studies point to the importance of a healthy diet combined with exercise for cancer risk reduction.**

Tips For A Healthy Diet

Limit Your Carbohydrate Intake. For women whose tumors are positive for the IGFI receptor, reducing carbohydrate intake after diagnosis could reduce the risk of breast cancer recurrence. Even a modest reduction in carbohydrate intake had a measurable effect on risk in recent studies. **Eat Complex Carbohydrates found in vegetables, fruits, whole grains, beans and peas. They provide lots of fiber that breaks down more slowly in your system.** Choosing complex carbohydrates helps to control insulin and IGF levels. Too much insulin is associated with breast cancer and elevated IGF is linked to tumor growth.

Eat a plant-based diet: It contains loads of bioactive molecules and helps to activate genes that promote health and suppress cancer. A balanced diet should contain vegetables, legumes, fruits and whole grains. **Refined foods, like white flour and white sugar are devoid of nutrients.** High insulin levels are linked to a higher incidence of certain cancers, as well as diabetes, heart disease and hormonal imbalances.

Consume Healthy Fats: Fats are the building blocks of cell membranes and hormones, and control the balance of inflammatory and anti-inflammatory compounds in the body. Omega 3 fats help to decrease inflammation, which decreases your risk of cancer, heart disease, diabetes, arthritis and neurological diseases. Deep sea fish, fish oils, free range/organic poultry, grass fed meats, wild game and flax seeds are high in Omega 3 fatty acids. Use unrefined organic olive, flax, coconut and nut oils and moderate amounts of organic butter.

HIGH IN PESTICIDES: Lower your pesticide exposure nearly 80% by avoiding the 12 most contaminated fruits and vegetables.

Buy the organic versions.

- Apples
- Celery
- Potatoes
- Grapes
- Peaches
- Nectarines
- Cucumbers
- Hot peppers
- Cherry tomatoes
- Sweet bell peppers
- Strawberries/berries
- Spinach/leafy greens

LOW IN PESTICIDES: These fruits and vegetables have the least pesticide contamination among conventionally-grown foods. (EWG)

- Pineapples
- Plantains
- Mangoes
- Bananas
- Watermelon
- Plums
- Kiwi Fruit
- Blueberries
- Papaya
- Grapefruit
- Avocado
- Cauliflower
- Brussels Sprouts
- Asparagus
- Radishes
- Broccoli
- Onions
- Okra
- Cabbage
- Eggplant

Use organic oils because fat is where pesticides and herbicides are stored. Heating vegetable oils at high temperatures can make fatty acids carcinogenic. Peanut oil, coconut oil, ghee (clarified butter) and extra virgin olive oil stand up best to cooking.

Eat Some Protein: It is helpful to eat some protein with every meal. Organic is preferred because of the hormones and antibiotics fed to animals that accumulate in the fat. Grass fed organic meat, Seafood*, Organic eggs, Organic dairy, Grain + beans. Seafood can be high in heavy metals and PCB's. Safer seafood is wild salmon, oysters, shrimp, farm-raised rainbow trout, flounder, perch, tilapia and scallops. They have the lowest level of mercury and can be eaten more than once a week.

Why you should eat organic: Many pesticides and herbicides sprayed on fruits, vegetables and grains are "estrogen mimics" and can stimulate the growth of breast tumors and cause hormonal imbalances in both women and men. Organic food is grown without chemicals, hormones or antibiotics and has also been found to be higher in nutrients than foods grown in commercially fertilized, nutrient-depleted soil. Organic eggs, dairy products and meats are higher in nutrients, and free of the estrogen-like hormones and antibiotics that are fed to the animals and stored in their fat. *Avoid genetically modified foods as the long term risks are unknown.*

Top Anti-cancer Foods

Cruciferous vegetables and brightly colored fruits and vegetables are highest in bioflavonoids, antioxidants and cancer fighting phytochemicals. Eat 400 to 800 grams (15 - 30 ounces) or five or more portions (servings) a day. **Fermented foods** such as yogurt, miso, and tempeh and sea vegetables are also recommended.

VEGETABLES

- Broccoli
- Cauliflower
- Brussel sprouts
- Cabbage
- Kale
- Onions
- Garlic
- Sprouts
- Carrots
- Green beans
- Squash
- Sweet potatoes
- Tomatoes
- Yams

FRUITS

- All berries
- Apricots
- Grapefruit
- Grapes
- Lemons
- Mangoes
- Oranges
- Papayas
- Peaches
- Persimmons
- Strawberries (organic only!)
- Tangerines

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April

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
			1	2	Good Friday 3	Passover 4
Easter Sunday 5	6	7	8	9	10	11
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How To Stay Healthy In A Toxic World

There are over 50,000 synthetic chemicals in common use and the majority of them haven't been tested for their impact on human health. Food chemicals, herbicides, pesticides, solvents, drugs, gases and heavy metals are part of our modern environment. Some we consume deliberately while many others are inadvertently ingested or absorbed—no matter how careful we are. Body-burden tests, for measuring exposure to chemicals reveal flame retardants, plasticizers, pesticides and perfluorinated chemicals in the blood of almost every person studied. These toxins all have some negative impact on our tissues and metabolic systems before the body can detoxify and excrete them. Some chemicals stimulate a particular response from cells while others can trigger an extreme immune response, such as asthma. The really dangerous chemicals have a direct toxic affect, destroying cells and enzymes or altering DNA-rich foods, intake of dietary fiber and fish.

CANNED FOODS: The epoxy resin lining in canned foods contains bisphenol A (BPA) which leaches into food and then into us. Studies show that the amount leached is enough to cause breast cancer cells to proliferate in the lab.

Solution: Avoid all canned foods. Choose fresh and frozen foods.

PLASTICS: Many plastics contain hormone-disrupting phthalates, especially polyvinyl chloride, or PVC (usually recycling code 3). Avoid clear, shatterproof plastic that contains BPA (usually code 7). Safer plastics are coded 1, 2, 4 and 5.

Solution: Choose stainless steel, glass or ceramic. Buy PVC free shower curtains.

DON'T MICROWAVE IN PLASTIC: Even "microwave safe" plastic can leach BPA and other chemicals into your food when heated.

Solution: Choose glass or ceramic containers. Cover your food with a ceramic plate or an unbleached paper towel instead of plastic wrap.

WATER BOTTLES: Bisphenol A (BPA) is used in polycarbonate plastic reusable water bottles. It's found in rigid plastics, the lining of food cans, and other products. BPA is a hormone disruptor.

Solution: Use non-toxic, reusable stainless steel bottles or BPA free plastics.

FRAGRANCE: Fragrance contains dozens of chemicals—including hormone-disrupting phthalates and musks. Used in cleaning, laundry, and personal-care products, fabric softeners, perfumes and scented detergents these chemicals go directly into the bloodstream when applied to our skin and are absorbed into the skin from our clothing.

Solution: Buy fragrance-free products; purchase natural essential oils.

PARABENS (Methyl, Propyl, Ethyl, Butyl): Hormone disruptor linked to early puberty. Found in cosmetics, lotions, creams, sunscreens, shaving/styling gels, toothpaste, shampoo, conditioners.

Solution: Read labels to avoid products containing parabens.

CASH REGISTER RECEIPTS: Bisphenol A (BPA) is used in cash register thermal paper receipts. It's a hormone disruptor.

Solution: Do Not take a cash register receipt if you don't need to.

AVOID DRY CLEANING: Conventional dry cleaning uses perchloroethylene (PERC), formaldehyde, naphthalene, benzene. It has long-term health effects including cancer. Short term exposures can cause skin irritation, dizziness and headaches.

Solution: Use dry cleaners that clean with the CO2 process or hand wash with unscented fabric detergent for delicates.

CLEANING PRODUCTS: Many cleaning products contain the sudsing agents diethanolamine (DEA) and triethanolamine (TEA). They form nitrosamines – which are carcinogens and penetrate the skin.

Solution: Make your own. Use baking soda for scouring; vinegar to clean glass.

CHLORINE: Women with breast cancer have 50% to 60% higher levels of organochlorines in their breast tissue than women without breast cancer. Chlorine is found in city water supplies, paper products, coffee filters, tampons and swimming pools. Harmful effects are intensified when the fumes are heated, as in the shower or dishwasher.

Solution: Use non-chlorine alternatives to bleach for household cleaning, laundry; Use unbleached toilet paper and tampons; Use natural coffee filters; Use a household water filter; Swim in salt water pools.

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Solution: Make your own. Use baking soda for scouring; vinegar to clean glass.

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Mary

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Mother's Day 10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24						
31	Memorial Day 25	26	27	28	29	30

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Lifestyle Factors That Can Alter Gene Expression

We know that lifestyle factors play an important role in cancer development. That's the bad news. The good news is that you can do something about your lifestyle. If we exercise regularly, lose weight, eat diets rich in fruits and vegetables, sleep in darkness and learn how to handle stress we might prevent 70% of all cancers. Lifestyle choices can influence a person's risk for cancer by generating growth-promoting signals that affect cells primed to become cancerous, or that already are cancerous. Cancer is ultimately a disease of malfunctioning genes. Only 10% of all cancers occur in people at high risk of developing cancer because of inherited genetic defects. Most of us are born with good genes, but during the course of our lifetimes, genes become damaged and mutate.

DIET AND PHYSICAL ACTIVITY: Studies show that women who eat a minimum of five servings of vegetables and fruit per day combined with regular physical activity roughly 30 minutes of brisk walking daily, reduce their risk of recurrence even if they have the BRCA mutations. Natural plant foods contain a variety of phytochemicals, micronutrients with a variety of anti-cancer effects: anti-estrogenic, anti-proliferative, pro-apoptotic, anti-angiogenic, anti-oxidant and anti-inflammatory effects. Non-organic foods contain chemicals that can mutate genes and therefore should be avoided when possible.

CONTROL YOUR WEIGHT: One of the most important aspects of breast cancer survival is achieving a healthful body weight. Being overweight or obese increases the risk of several cancers, including those of the breast (in women past menopause).

WHAT ARE THE RISKS RELATED TO WEIGHT? Breast cancer risk begins to increase when adult weight gain (since age 18) is more than 20 pounds. Studies show that women who gained 21-30 pounds since age 18 were 40% more likely to develop breast cancer than women who had not gained more than 5 pounds, and women who gained 70 pounds doubled their risk.

WHY DOES OBESITY INCREASE CANCER RISK? Obesity leads to high levels of insulin-like growth factor (IGF-1) in the circulation. This may protect early-stage cancer cells scattered throughout the body from dying, since IGF-1 inhibits the action of cell suicide genes. It also leads to inflammation which may explain the link between obesity and cancer. Inflammation is a normal body process designed to heal the body following injury. When inflammation becomes protracted and chronic the injured tissue is constantly bathed in growth-promoting cytokines that tell stem cells in the tissue to begin multiplying, in order to replace the cells that have been injured and destroyed. The more overweight a person is, the greater the level of inflammatory signals.

HOW MUCH PHYSICAL ACTIVITY IS NEEDED TO LOWER BREAST CANCER RISK? What kinds of activities count? Physical activity affects breast cancer in 2 distinct ways: directly, by influencing circulating hormones, and indirectly, by helping to control weight. It is recommended that women be moderately to vigorously active for 45-60 minutes on 5 or more days per week to lower breast cancer risk. Activities considered moderate are those that make you breathe as hard as you would during a brisk walk. This includes things like walking, biking, and even housework and gardening. Vigorous ac-

tivities generally engage large muscle groups and cause a noticeable increase in heart rate, breathing depth and frequency, and sweating.

LIGHT AT NIGHT AND EMR'S: The most overlooked hormone disruptors are exposure to light at night and the electromagnetic energy fields generated from cell phones, night lights and many electrical devices. Overnight exposure of women to elevated levels of EMR disrupts melatonin production and increases estrogen levels. At night, continual cell phone use, watching TV, sitting in front of computer screens, reading with artificial light into the wee hours, or sleeping with a light on, all contribute to melatonin deficiency. Recent studies show that even exposure to dim light at night may make breast cancers resistant to chemotherapy.

WHAT ABOUT ALCOHOL CONSUMPTION? HOW MUCH IS TOO MUCH?

Drinking alcohol increases estrogen levels in the body and some experts believe alcohol increases the risk of estrogen sensitive cancers. Beyond the estrogen connection, alcohol itself is believed to be carcinogenic. For ER positive breast cancer survivors, studies suggest risk of recurrence increases when a woman has more than one or two drinks per week. All women, but especially those who drink, should consume folate-rich foods: leafy greens, legumes, and enriched whole-grain products are good sources.

Some Suggestions

- * Make sure your room is quiet and dark.
- * Sleep at least 3-5 feet away from outlets and unplug devices. EMFs can disrupt your pineal gland and its melatonin production.
- * If possible, complete work during the day; sleep at night.
- * Avoid watching TV or using your computer at least an hour or so before going to bed.
- * Avoid light at night. If you need a night light to go to the bathroom use a red bulb which won't suppress melatonin.
- * Natural daylight is just as important as nighttime darkness in maintaining a normal circadian rhythm. Try to get outside for 15 minutes each morning.
- * Exercise regularly. Exercise done early in the day may promote better quality sleep. Vigorous exercise just before bedtime may delay sleep.

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June

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Father's Day 21	22	23	24	25	26	27
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Stress Reduction

Stress is a part of our lives and how we handle that stress can have an impact on our health. It is thought that stress may fuel cancer by triggering a 'master switch' gene which allows the disease to spread, according to new research, so behavioral factors and responses to stress must be considered along with genetic factors in attempting to understand why some individuals develop cancer, or what the clinical course will be. Research has shown

Learning to cope with stress is not an easy task. Most of us never forget the day we were diagnosed with cancer. As that date approaches each year, our fears can increase. Follow-up appointments and any imaginary or real new symptoms can have the same effect. Sometimes, just walking through the hospital doors can be scary. Levels of cortisol, the stress hormone, rise with increased stress. High levels of cortisol suppress immune response by reducing natural killer cell activity. Studies suggest that imbalances in cortisol levels can cause tumors to grow faster. That is one reason we need to learn how to cope with everyday stress, including the fear of recurrent cancer. We may not have control over cancer recurrence, but we can have control over the worry. None of us know how long we will live and we need to enjoy whatever time we have.

Some helpful stress reduction techniques are:

- * **Let go of what you cannot control**—Meditation, prayer or mindfulness training can help separate the processes of our mind (which will often go for the 'worst case scenario') from what is really happening in our life.
- * **Get the help you need**—Support groups, therapies, telephone hotlines and help with the daily tasks can help to free up precious emotional energy. Stay involved with people; don't isolate.
- * **Humor**—Laughter really is good medicine.
- * **Distraction**—Keep busy. Go to a movie, go for a hike, have lunch with a friend. Do anything that can take your mind off your fear.
- * **Have a good cry**—Whether you do it alone or with others, crying can release feelings of fear.
- * **Make your life reflect you**—Your life is your own. Make it reflect your beliefs, and your choices. Do what you love.

Studies show that a variety of interventions reduce negative biological stress effects and can benefit women with breast cancer.

Many complementary therapies enhance healing and reduce stress by focusing on the connections between the mind, body, and spirit. Three main types of therapy are psychological, such as support groups; physical, such as deep relaxation and exercise; religious and spiritual, such as prayer and meditation.

that stress can lower the body's ability to prevent cancer from developing. Typically, our immune system recognizes those abnormal cells and kills them before they produce a tumor. There are 3 important things that can happen to prevent cancer from developing—the immune system can prevent the agents from invading in the first place, DNA can repair the abnormal cells or killer T-cells can kill off cancer cells.

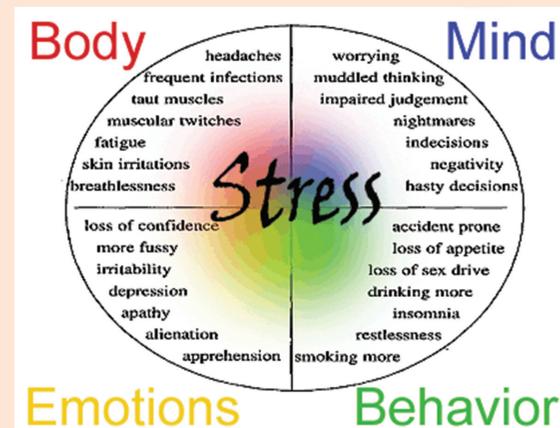
It is important to be aware that there is no evidence that these therapies will actually cure cancer. Nonetheless, these methods have been proven extremely helpful to people with cancer in a number of ways.

They can:

- * Reduce the stress and anxiety that accompany a cancer diagnosis.
- * Control some symptoms of cancer.
- * Ease some side effects caused by conventional cancer treatments.
- * Improve overall health.
- * Help identify what is important in life and develop a greater sense of well-being.
- * Provide help in coping with the struggles people with cancer may face.

Some of the most common techniques people use to reduce stress are:

- | | |
|-------------------------|-----------------|
| Art Therapy | Massage Therapy |
| Meditation Prayer | Biofeedback |
| Psychotherapy | Exercise |
| Qi Gong/Tai Chi | Guided Imagery |
| Yoga | Hypnosis |
| Joining a Support Group | |





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Vitamins, Herbs and Supplements

Eating a well balanced diet provides a wide variety of antioxidants, vitamins and enzymes, but many health professionals agree that supplements are now necessary to counteract exposures to toxic chemicals in our air and water, pesticides and herbicides in our food, soil depletion, and the depletion of nutrients caused by stress. Supplements should be tailored to an individual's needs which can be determined by testing. We recommend that you consult with a knowledgeable practitioner to determine your specific needs.

The following are popular supplements:

Natural Aromatase Inhibitors - Aromatase inhibitors are used to stop the production of estrogen in post-menopausal women who have estrogen receptor positive breast cancer. The three aromatase inhibitors commonly used are Arimidex, Aromasin and Femara. These medications can produce problematic side effects.

Natural aromatase inhibitors include flavones, resveratrol (found in red wine); oleuropein (olive leaf) and Chrysin, found in *Passiflora incarnate* (passion flower). Red wine, alcohol-free red wine, green tea and black tea (200microL/mL) also decreases aromatase activity. Ellagic acid found in pomegranates also inhibits aromatase. Its metabolite, Urolithin B, significantly inhibited cell growth and has the potential to prevent estrogen-responsive breast cancers. Studies are ongoing.

Curcumin - Exerts its biological influence through epigenetic modulation. Helps repair DNA that has been damaged by radiation. Has several cancer-fighting properties. Anti-inflammatory. *Curcuma longa* is a promising anticancer agent. Epidemiological evidence demonstrates that people who incorporate high doses of this spice in their diets have a lower incidence of cancer.

Calcium d- glucarate - Helps the body eliminate many harmful substances like abnormally high levels of steroid hormones including estrogen, testosterone, and progesterone.

Green Tea - Chemicals in green tea called polyphenols appear to inhibit two proteins that promote tumor cell growth and migration — namely, the vascular endothelial growth factor (VEGF) and the hepatocyte growth factor (HGF). Exhibits pro-oxidant abilities and can induce apoptosis (programmed cell death) in cancer cells.

CoQ10 - Clinical trials have shown that coenzyme Q10 helps protect the heart from the damaging side effects of doxorubicin.

Vitamin D - Higher levels of vitamin D are associated with reduced incidence rates of breast cancer worldwide. Vitamin D (calcitriol) is a hormone that promotes normal cell growth and cell differentiation, calcium absorption and helps to maintain hormonal balance and a healthy immune system. Vitamin D3 deficiency can lead to elevated levels of inflammatory markers such as hsCRP, IL-2, IL-6, and insulin resistance. Testing your vitamin D3 level is recommended. The 25-hydroxy vitamin D test can be done at many labs.

The best way to raise vitamin D levels is to allow limited exposure of your skin to the sun. Sunblock with an SPF of 15 or higher will block 100% of vitamin D production. Most people can supplement with 2000 IU vitamin D3 daily.

DIM (3,3'-diindolylmethane) - A phytonutrient found in cruciferous vegetables including cabbage, broccoli, brussels sprouts, kale, cauliflower, and turnips. Women with breast cancer make too little of the 2-hydroxy or "good" metabolite of estrogen and too much of the 16-hydroxy or "bad" variety. This dangerous form of estrogen dominance can result from inheritance, diet, or exposure to environmental chemicals. DIM supports a healthy estrogen balance by increasing beneficial 2-hydroxy estrogens and reducing the unwanted 16-hydroxy variety.

Ave ULTRA - A wheat germ extract that helps to promote immune system balance by promoting optimal NK immune cell targeting ability and the coordinated response of macrophages, B-cells and T-Cells. It shows great efficacy in reducing treatment side effects, supports healthy cell metabolic regulation and induces cell apoptosis.

Medicinal Mushrooms - Mushrooms have been shown to reduce cell proliferation and also have aromatase-blocking activity. They can stimulate components of cellular immunity such as T cells, B cells, macrophages and natural killer (NK) cells, demonstrate anti-tumor activity and may restrict tumor metastasis.

AHCC - Shows a protective effect on the liver and other areas of the body against chemotherapy drugs damage. Helps in counteracting free radical damage to the cell DNA and in preventing cell oxidation, both thought to cause cell mutations.

Iodine - Iodine, a trace mineral concentrated in thyroid and breast tissue, helps to normalize the impact of estrogens on the breast and turns off the estrogen receptor sites. Consumption of Iodine has dropped 50% since the 1970's. An iodine loading test should be done to assess levels. Supplementation comes in the form of Ioderal tablets or Lugol's Iodine Solution.

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August



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Myths And Realities About Breast Cancer

Compiled by Breast Cancer Options from a variety of sources.

Myth: If your mammogram is negative, there is nothing to worry about.

Reality: Mammograms fail to detect as much as 20% of breast cancer in women over 50, and as much as 40% in younger women. Younger women at high risk should talk with their doctor about the benefits and limitations of starting mammograms when they are younger and use other technologies. Clinical breast exams and knowing what is normal for your breast are also crucial pieces of the screening process.

Myth: Only women with a family history of breast cancer are at risk.

Reality: Roughly 75-90% of women diagnosed with breast cancer have no identifiable risk factors for the disease. If a first-degree relative (a parent, sibling or child) has or has had breast cancer, your risk of developing it doubles. Two first degree relatives with the disease further increase your risk. Your father's family history is as important as your mother's. The inherited mutations, BRCA1 and BRCA2, are not always passed on.

Myth: Breast cancer is the second leading killer of women.

Reality: Breast cancer kills 40,000 women a year in the U.S., but stroke (96,000 deaths), lung cancer (71,000), and chronic lower respiratory disease (67,000) each kill more women annually.

Myth: Women have a 1-in-8 chance at any age of getting breast cancer.

Reality: Most people think they have a higher risk of breast cancer than they actually do. Estimates are that a woman age 20 has about a 1 in 2,000 risk of developing breast cancer in the next ten years; at age 40, about 1 in 100; age 60, 1 in 28; age 85, 1 in 8. About 50% of breast cancer occurs among women age 62 or older.

Myth: After I've survived 5 years, my breast cancer won't return.

Reality: Breast cancer can recur at any time, although it is more likely to happen within the first five to 10 years after diagnosis and treatment: 75% of women who will get a recurrence see it within six years, and 25% recur within the 10 years after that.

Myth: A diagnosis of breast cancer is an emergency and treatment decisions have to be made immediately.

Reality: It may feel like an emergency but most breast cancers have been present for 8 to 10 years by the time you can feel a lump. It's important to take time to gather information and get second opinions to make informed decisions about treatment.

Myth: Most breast lumps are cancerous.

Reality: Roughly 80% of lumps in women's breasts are cysts or other non cancerous conditions, but report all lumps to your doctor.

Myth: Overweight women have the same breast cancer risk as other women.

Reality: Weight gain after the age of 18 is associated with a 45% increase in breast cancer risk as well as higher rates of breast cancer recurrence and mortality in both premenopausal and postmenopausal breast cancer patients. Weight gain affects survival, especially if you gained the weight later in life.

Myth: I'm too young to worry about breast cancer.

Reality: You're never too young to get breast cancer. While a lump in a younger woman is much less likely to be cancer than a lump in an older woman, it can be cancer and needs to be checked out. 25% of women with breast cancer are younger than 50.

Myth: Needle biopsies can disturb cancer cells and cause them to spread to other parts of the body.

Reality: There's no conclusive evidence for this claim. Despite some previous concerns, a 2004 study found no increased spread of cancer among patients undergoing needle biopsies compared to those who did not.

Myth: Mammograms prevent breast cancer.

Reality: Mammography is a screening test to detect cancer already present in the breast. It does not prevent cancer, nor will it always detect the disease. Breast cancer awareness campaigns urge women to have annual mammograms so that breast cancer can be found early and "cured." Regardless of how small a tumor is when it is detected, some cancers are so aggressive that they are not easily treated with current available therapies.

Myth: Antiperspirants increase your risk of getting breast cancer.

Reality: We don't know. Because of their weak estrogen-like properties, parabens—used as preservatives in some antiperspirants—are possibly carcinogenic. Studies found parabens in 18 of 20 samples of tissue from human breast tumors. However, this does not prove that parabens cause breast tumors. More research is needed. In the meantime avoid parabens in any product for use especially in the breast and armpit area.

Myth: Removing the entire breast gives you a better chance of surviving cancer than having a lumpectomy with radiation therapy.

Reality: Survival rates are about the same for women who have mastectomies and for women who choose the breast-conserving option of removing only part of the breast, followed by radiation treatments. However, there are some cases—such as with extensive DCIS disease, the presence of BRCA gene mutations, or particularly large tumors—when lumpectomy and radiation may not be an appropriate treatment option.

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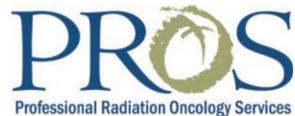


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Screening, Detection and Follow-up

SCREENING

While mammography is still considered the best tool for early diagnosis in **most** women, there are harms and benefits. The new guidelines state that the decision to perform screening for women 40 to 49 years of age should consider the individual patient risk, values and comfort level of the patient. For women with a lifetime breast cancer risk of more than 20% or who have a BRCA mutation, screening of some kind should begin at 25 years of age or at the age that is 5 to 10 years younger than the earliest age that breast cancer was diagnosed in the family.

The recommended screening for women who have never been diagnosed with breast cancer and are not at high risk of developing the disease is **different** from the recommended screening for women who have never had a breast cancer diagnosis but are considered at *high risk*.

Detection methods, mostly mammograms, are used to detect cancer as early as possible. Techniques other than mammography may be used when women are considered at high risk.

There are four different categories of breast cancer found during screening tests.

- * Slow-growing cancers that would be found and successfully treated with or without screening.
- * Aggressive cancers, so-called *bad cancers* that are deadly whether they are found early by screening, or late because of a lump or other symptoms. **Screening does not help women with these aggressive cancers.**
- * Innocuous cancers that would never have amounted to anything, but they still are treated once they show up on a mammogram. Women with these cancers are over diagnosed, are treated unnecessarily, and therefore are harmed by screening.
- * A fraction of cancers that are deadly but, when found at just the right moment, can have their courses changed by treatment. Women with these cancers are helped by mammograms. Clinical trial data states that *1 woman per 1,000 healthy women screened over 10 years falls into this category.*

Detection is Not Prevention!

Never rely on any technology as your sole method of surveillance. Knowing what is normal for you is important. Do regular self-exams and get regular professional exams. Early detection of a recurrence can almost double survival chances.

TECHNOLOGY

Digital vs. 3D Mammograms: 3D mammograms have been found to correctly identify cancers 4-5% more often than regular 2D digital or film mammograms. Just as importantly, women who undergo screening with 3D mammography are 15% less likely to be called back for more testing due to a suspicious finding that turns out not to be cancer. Two large, retrospective studies published in The American Journal of Roentgenology and The Journal of the American Medical Association show that 3D mammography finds significantly more invasive cancers.

Timing of Mammograms: For pre-menopausal women mammography is the most accurate on days 1-9 of the menstrual cycle. This is a low-estrogen, low-progesterone phase and breast tissue tends to be less dense, so mammograms are more apt to spot small, hard-to-see tumors.)

Ultrasound: About 40% of women, usually a younger population, have dense breast tissue and ultrasound is a tool for them. It can determine if a suspicious area is a non-cancerous cyst or solid tissue (dense mass). The FDA has approved a new 3D automated breast ultrasound system (ABUS) that could help clinicians find even more cancers in women with dense breast tissue. The ABUS finds more cancers in women with dense breasts than mammograms alone.

Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI): MRI is used if a breast problem is detected using mammography, other imaging or physical exam. MRI offers better sensitivity for detection of breast cancers for women who carry a BRCA-1 or BRCA-2 mutation.

Breast Self Exams (BSE): 40% of breast cancers are discovered by women or their partners. Knowing the landscape of their body and noticing slight changes can send women to the doctor for a mammogram. Checking one's breast can help detect breast cancers that mammograms miss.

FOLLOW-UP

After a breast cancer diagnosis and treatment many women wonder how they will be followed to make sure that any recurrence will be found 'early'.

The most effective way to detect recurrence and/or metastatic breast cancer is to have a periodic clinical exam along with a detailed medical history unless you have developed symptoms.

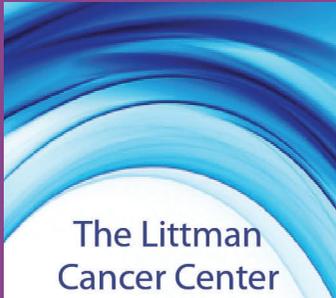
Physical exams and an updated medical history should be given every three to six months for the first three years after primary treatment, then once or twice yearly for the next two years and annually thereafter.

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October

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Detoxification

Supporting your body's ability to detoxify effectively helps to maintain wellness and may prevent illness later in life. Our bodies are constantly detoxifying as our metabolism processes waste and as we absorb, inhale and ingest allergens, pathogens, chemicals and other toxins.

Cancer and other diseases are on the rise; arthritis, allergies and obesity are also rapidly increasing. A wide range of symptoms such as headaches, fatigue, pains, gastrointestinal problems, immune weaknesses, and psychological distress are being seen by physicians in record numbers. Although a connection between increased toxicity and increased disease incidence seems obvious, more research must be done to connect them.

It is important to understand how to avoid or eliminate toxins and this can

be accomplished in a number of ways. We can reduce our toxic load by the choice of the food we eat, the water we drink and by purchasing toxin free personal care and household products but they cannot be entirely avoided.

Detoxification can have both positive and negative side effects. On the positive side you may experience an increase in your energy level as your body gets rid of all those pollutants and toxins. On the negative side you may feel some side effects in the first few days: Headaches, sore muscles, cranky moods, insomnia and general feeling of fatigue. These reactions are sometimes called healing crises, which are caused by temporarily increased levels of toxins in the body due to elimination and cleansing.

Detoxification Methods

Benefits and tips

Skin brushing

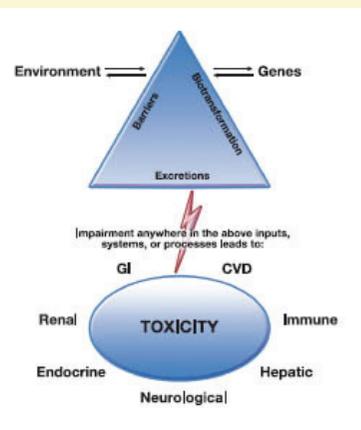
This is an easy way to stimulate the lymph system, which in turn enhances the body's natural detoxification processes to excrete toxins through the skin. Use a dry skin brush made of vegetable bristles that are neither too stiff nor too soft. Immediately before showering or bathing, start with the feet and gently brush up toward the heart. Brush from the extremities toward the center. Brush gently in a circular motion around your abdomen and breasts. It only takes a minute or two...not long! It shouldn't scratch, but you should feel some friction against the skin.

Epsom salts baths

The salts draw toxins out of your body. Start with a clean tub, take a shower first, then fill the tub with the hottest water you can stand. Begin with 1/4 cup of epsom salts, work up to 4 cups, bathing for as long as 1/2 hour. Get out of the tub slowly.

Saunas, hot tubs or sweat lodges

The heat of the sauna causes you to sweat. While sweating, your body releases toxins, including heavy metals that the body stores in fatty tissue. Sweating therapy reduces fat stores releasing these poisons for excretion through the stimulation of receptors in the fat. Make sure that you drink sufficient liquids to offset the loss of body fluids through sweating. The ingestion of cold-pressed oils can prevent mobilized toxins from being re-absorbed by the intestines.



Increasing Lymph Flow: The lymphatic system is the "garbage disposal of the body and relies on our conscious movement. Rebounding is an effective therapy for increasing lymph flow and draining toxins from the body. The up-down movement forces lymphatic fluid to flow and flushes toxins while stimulating the immune system.

Detoxification Tips: paying attention to these will help reduce and release Toxin Overload

- Diet, nutrition, assimilation and elimination
- Activating elimination through the skin
- Breathing, oxygenation and clean air
- Lymphatic system activation
- Chelating ionizing radiation
- Mental detoxification
- Emotional cleansing
- Spiritual cleansing
- Internal cleansing
- Life energy flow
- Avoid toxins
- Sunlight
- Fasting
- Love

Detoxification is a powerful tool and should be done under knowledgeable and professional supervision.

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Melissa Harris, MFA, is an internationally known artist, author, and psychic.

Her images grace the covers of books, CDs, magazines, and calendars worldwide.

Melissa also teaches "Painting Outside the Lines"™ art-making workshops in Hurley, NY. She is known for her *Spirit Essence Portraits*.

www.melissaharris.com

November

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Breast Cancer Advocacy: Moving Beyond Awareness

Breast cancer survivors, their families and friends care deeply about the future and want to make a difference. The opportunities to participate as a breast cancer advocate abound, both in number and type. Advocates have also changed the way people deal with this disease. Women are no longer simply passive patients, but rather they are survivors, informed consumers, advocates and activists who are speaking up for themselves and others and speaking out for issues relevant to the treatment and prevention of breast cancer. Becoming an advocate helps them get through their breast cancer experiences and gain a feeling of control over their lives.

Advocacy is anything from caring and support at the individual level to addressing issues at the local, state and federal levels. Some examples:

- * Bring a meal, do an errand, help with chores, or drive a cancer patient to an appointment.
- * As someone who has “been there,” provide personal emotional support and knowledge for those newly diagnosed.
- * Bring the voice of the breast cancer survivor to researchers. This has improved the process of scientific research in many ways.
- * Help to fundraise for your local breast cancer organization.

Political advocacy for breast cancer has helped breast cancer patients in numerous ways. Women now have more access to screening, diagnosis and better treatments. Advocates have been instrumental in increasing federal funding for breast cancer research and in helping to pass laws which established a program available to all states that provides breast and cervical cancer treatment coverage to low-income, uninsured women. Advocates have called for a voice in policy and research decisions to ensure better, more effective treatments for breast cancer patients.

Most people are aware of the message “early detection saves lives” and the month of October’s staggering array of Pink Ribbon “cause marketing” promotional campaigns and company tie-ins, target every conceivable consumer item “for the Cure”. When these companies use known or suspected cancer causing ingredients in their products, which many - if not most - do, the practice becomes “pinkwashing”. These companies need to decide if they want to be part of the problem or part of the solution. Their supported research focuses primarily on detection and treatment with very little attention to primary prevention. Less than 10% of research dollars nationally looks for the cause or causes of breast cancer with a goal of prevention.

You can make a difference! Ask questions before you buy products with pink ribbons. Advocacy is a tool for change. Early detection and better treatments are not enough. Despite doing everything that we now can, about 25% of the women who are diagnosed and treated for early-stage breast cancer will later learn that their cancer has spread to other organs. Learning to treat early breast cancer so that it doesn’t spread and to manage advanced breast cancer is essential, but, we must learn what causes breast cancer in the first place to ensure the health of future generations. .

Advocates have changed the conversation, challenging corporations; the pharmaceutical industry; local, state and federal legislators; healthcare institutions and providers; health agencies and the media. Advocacy organizations such as The New York State Breast Cancer Network, Breast Cancer Action, Breast Cancer Fund, the National Breast Cancer Coalition, the Environmental Working Group and Silent Spring Institute, among others, have waged many effective awareness campaigns, and have been instrumental in changes in corporate business practices and the introduction and/or passage of local and national legislation to protect the public from toxic exposures and inequities in medical care. Some examples are: the banning in New York State of endocrine disrupting Bisphenol-A (BPA) in infant and baby toys, bottles and feeding products, the removal of the artificial hormone rGBH, from Yoplait by General Mills, The Safe Chemicals Act 2010 and the Toxic Chemicals Safety Act 2010 in Congress, the regulations of certain insurance practices and legal challenge to the patenting of genes by pharmaceutical companies.

Become an advocate now! Advocate for yourself or a loved one and gather information based on evidence to aid in informed decision making. Help your family and friends reduce their risk of breast cancer through healthy behavioral and lifestyle changes.

Join with others through local organizations, such as Breast Cancer Options; state organizations or national organizations, such as those mentioned here to work with community leaders and elected officials at all levels to advocate for regulations and laws that benefit cancer patients.

845-339-HOPE
www.BreastCancerOptions.org
hope@BreastCancerOptions.org

December

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If you have breasts or know someone who does...

Please show your support.

Breast Cancer Options is a grassroots, nonprofit organization and the largest provider of peer support, advocacy and education services in the Hudson Valley. The current fiscal crisis has affected our budget and we need your help.

We rely more than ever upon individual contributions to accomplish our work.

Please send a check payable to **Breast Cancer Options**
101 Hurley Avenue, Suite 10
Kingston, NY 12401

...or make a credit card donation
Online on our web site
www.breastcanceroptions.org

...or call us at
845-339-HOPE (4673)

Thank you

*Breast Cancer Options is a non-profit,
tax exempt 501(c)3 corporation.*

**All donations are tax-deductible
and truly appreciated!**

All of our services are free.

About Breast Cancer Options

Breast Cancer Options (BCO) is an organization of breast cancer survivors, advocates and healthcare professionals who understand that when you are diagnosed with breast cancer, you are suddenly faced with some of the most important decisions you will ever make about your own healthcare. When you explore your options, we want you to understand:

- * You do not have to face all this, including physician visits, by yourself.
- * You are important and deserve answers. We will help you get them.
- * What information and sources are credible and reliable.
- * Which lifestyle changes and complementary therapies can be integrated in treatment.

Support

- * **Companion/Advocate Program**—Trained, knowledgeable and sympathetic breast cancer survivors, upon request, accompany newly diagnosed patients to medical visits.
- * **Peer-led support groups**—Community-based in Ulster, Dutchess, Greene, Columbia, Sullivan and Orange counties. See our web site or call for locations and time.
- * **Camp Lightheart**—A free sleepover camp for the children of breast cancer survivors.
- * **Retreat for women with metastatic breast cancer**
- * **Massage Clinics**—Held in conjunction with our support groups.
- * **Telephone and e-mail consultations**—Questions are answered with information from reliable sources.
- * **Peer-to-Peer Mentoring**—Talk to someone who has gone through the same experience.

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Education/Information

- * **Annual Healthy Lifestyles Calendar**
- * **BCO News e-mail updates:** Disseminated weekly to Breast Cancer Survivors and Healthcare Professionals all over the world.
- * **Breast Cancer Options web site** offers a variety of up-to-date information and resources.
- * **Annual Complementary Medicine Conference:** Top professionals in complementary and integrative therapies speak and present workshops on the most current modalities.
- * **Healthy Lifestyles Program:** A series of workshops to look at the ways we can make small, easy changes in our daily lives to improve our health after a cancer diagnosis

Advocacy

- * BCO is an advocate for breast cancer patients at the regional, state and national levels.
- * We can help with referrals for insurance and legal problems.
- * BCO is a member of the New York State Breast Cancer Network.

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16 Steps To A Healthier Life For You And Your Family

A growing body of evidence shows that healthy lifestyle factors like a good diet and regular exercise provide significant benefits, possibly offering protection against cancer recurrences about on a par with chemotherapy and the newer hormonal and drug treatments. If you combine these risk-reducing habits and also limit your exposure to toxins you will benefit even more.

- 1. Exercise!** Breast cancer patients will be 50 percent less likely to die from the disease than sedentary women if they exercise on a regular basis. Women undergoing treatments for breast cancer benefit from moderate intensity, regular aerobic activity.
- 2. Control your weight.** Weight is a bit confusing. If you are overweight before menopause, your risk of breast cancer is lower than average. If you are overweight after menopause, your risk of breast cancer is higher than average.
- 3. Spend eight hours a night in darkness** to encourage normal melatonin levels. The hormone melatonin is released at night and has cancer-fighting properties. It's the reason you get sleepy when it's dark and research indicates that melatonin also puts cancer cells to sleep. Make sure you get regular exposure to bright light during the daytime.
- 4. Eat an organically grown diet** whenever possible. Your diet should contain fruits and vegetables, complex carbohydrates, organic protein and healthy fats. Breast cancer has been linked to some pesticides used on non-organic fruits and vegetables and estrogen-like hormones used in raising livestock.
- 5. Avoid fried, char-broiled, or barbecued** as forms of cooking. The Char contains PAHs polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons that cause mammary tumors in animals. Can't give it up? Take an aspirin with your char-broiled meal, as studies suggest that aspirin may negate the potentially harmful effects of flame-broiled foods.
- 6. Avoid bleached products,** i.e. coffee filters, paper, napkins, toilet tissue, tampons and sanitary napkins. Using bleached coffee filters alone can result in a lifetime exposure to dioxin that exceeds acceptable risks. The FDA detected dioxins and dozens of other substances in conventional tampons.
- 7. Avoid using chlorine bleach** for household cleaning or laundry. The chlorine in your dish-washing detergent mixes with steam to create a gas. When the dishwasher is opened, this toxic gas is released. Hydrogen peroxide bleaches are a safe alternative; they break down into water and oxygen.
- 8. Drink filtered or bottled water,** not city water that contains chlorine and fluoride. A simple water filter can now serve as a valuable safeguard against toxic substances and cancer.
- 9. Do not use pesticides or herbicides** on your lawn or garden. They mimic estrogen, a known breast cancer risk factor. A cup of salt in a gallon of vinegar will kill weeds.
- 10. Reduce or eliminate purchase of plastic products.** Some plastics leach hormone-disrupting chemicals into whatever they come in contact with. Polyvinyl chloride (PVC) plastics are dangerous and used in toys that children put in their mouths, so keep an eye out for nontoxic toys.
- 11. Use personal care products without chemicals** like parabens or phthalates. They disrupt normal hormone function and are found in many personal care products.
- 12. Avoid alcohol.** Regular, moderate use of alcohol affects the levels of important female hormones. Two to five drinks per day may be associated with a 40% higher rate of breast cancer than in non-drinkers. Women who choose to drink can lower their risk of developing breast cancer by taking 400 mcg. of folic acid or eat a folate rich diet.
- 13. Use wet cleaning rather than dry cleaning** which contains PERC (perchloroethylene). If you must use traditional dry cleaning, open the plastic bags on your clothing and air them out before putting them in a closet or on your body.
- 14. Avoid PBDEs (polybrominated diphenyl ethers)** found in electronic equipment and furniture. They are endocrine disruptors linked to reproductive damage, affect thyroid hormones and may cause cancer. They are flame retardants often added to polyurethane foam, various plastics, and electronics equipment. Choose car-pet pads, bedding, cushions, and upholstered furniture made from natural fibers including wool, cotton, and hemp.
- 15. Learn how to handle stress.** Levels of the stress hormone cortisol rise with increased stress. High cortisol levels suppress immune response by reducing natural killer cell activity. These cells are important in surveillance against malignant cells and for destroying viruses and tumor cells.
- 16. Learn to read labels;** become an informed consumer.

BREAST CANCER OPTIONS, INC.

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