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## Combating cancer through diet and supplementation

BY DR. JULIE T. CHEN, M.D.

Dear Dr. Julie, I've had prostate cancer and I am now in remission. What I can eat or what supplements I can take to help me have the best chance at preventing a recurrence. Can you give me some suggestions?

**I** am sorry to hear that you've had prostate cancer but I am very glad to hear that you are in remission and have the clear mind to take active steps toward relapse prevention. There are many things you can do to *OptiMyz* your chances of prevention.

One of the main things you should keep in mind is that chronic inflammation is not optimal when it comes to cancer prevention goals. Aim to eat an anti-inflammatory diet with a wide array of vegetables that have different colors to help your body try to turn on the off switch for inflammation.

Another basic tenet of disease and cancer prevention is to make sure you maintain a healthy weight. Fat cells are associated to more hormonal disturbances and inflammation, such as from adipokines (inflammatory chemicals stored in fat cells). Thus keeping a healthy weight is important.

Exercise is also important for weight control, improved metabolism, lipid profile and glucose control, all of which are important for maintaining optimal health. On top of all those benefits, exercise also helps to relieve stress which leads to more negative outcomes in almost all health outcomes. Keep your body moving towards a healthier, happier you.

Another lifestyle pattern we frequently overlook when we talk about health mainte-

nance or disease prevention is the thing we all do at night—sleep! Many times we underestimate the importance of sleep and relaxation on our health. With our hectic schedules we frequently pay attention to what we have to do and let our basic needs of sleep and relaxation fall to the wayside.

This is unfortunate because rest and relaxation is needed for our body to heal. For someone with your medical history, healing time is absolutely essential to you in your quest to maintain your health. Remember to make time for rest and relaxation on a daily basis.

As we move from lifestyle habits to your question about supplements, I want to caution you in making supplement choices on your own without medical guidance. You should always clear your supplements by your oncologist and primary care doctor and keep them updated on what you are taking. It is also important not to start supplements purely based on what you read.

Many times the details of supplements, their potential interaction with medications or their ability to alter your hormonal state is missed in descriptions you read in books or online. Make sure to discuss all supplements with your doctor before starting them. If you are interested in nutraceuticals, some supplements that have various anti-cancer properties



that you should ask your doctor about are curcumin with black pepper or bioperine, indole-3-carbinol, fibre, resveratrol, and fish oil, to name just a few.

Finally, I want to leave you with the knowledge that it is rarely just one thing that causes a major health issue and it is rarely one thing that will help to heal us. Aim to implement as many as possible, if not all, of the above healthy lifestyle changes to optimise health outcomes. Keep in mind that eating an anti-inflammatory diet is extremely important in disease prevention.

A diet that is mostly preservative-free, hormone-free and additive-free is an important factor in any anti-disease regimen. Try to eat as close to Mother Nature's garden as possible and in doing so you will be taking significant steps in your battle against recurrence of disease once you also make it a priority to rest, relax and keep your body fit with exercise. **Z**

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