



Dana-Farber
Cancer Institute



BRIGHAM AND
WOMEN'S HOSPITAL

DANA-FARBER/BRIGHAM AND WOMEN'S CANCER CENTER

Nutrition

Eat Plenty of Fruits and Vegetables

A diet rich in fruits and vegetables has many health benefits, including lowering your risk for certain cancers. Plants have natural compounds (such as antioxidants and phytonutrients) that can help improve health and prevent certain diseases. Research also suggests that eating healthy eating, along with regular exercise, is linked to a lower risk of breast cancer recurrence.

Current recommendations aren't based on complex diets or calorie counting. Simply look at your plate. Aim for meals made up of 2/3 (or more) vegetables, fruits whole grains or beans and 1/3 (or less) animal protein. Don't forget to also to moderate serving size as well. Taking a look at USDA's standard serving sizes (on the label of all packaged foods) can give you a clue.

Create a Healthy Plate

A well-balanced diet is important. At lunch and dinner, aim for ½-plate of vegetables, ¼-plate of complex carbohydrates (such as whole grains, bread, cereal, and rice) and ¼-plate lean protein.

Protein is an important part of your diet but try to limit your intake of red meat and processed meats (such as bacon, sausage, hot dogs, and lunch meats). Instead, try healthier proteins, such as fish, poultry, or beans. For more information see <http://www.aicr.org/new-american-plate/>

Choose Healthy Fats

A diet high in saturated and trans-fats can lead to weight gain and negative health outcomes, which is why it's important to choose healthy fats, such as monounsaturated fats and Omega-3 fats. Adopting a low-fat diet (<20% of daily calories from fat) after breast cancer can reduce the risk of dying from breast cancer as well as heart disease. So, the fat content in your diet should be relatively low and choose healthy ones!

Avoid these fats when possible	Choose these healthy fats instead
<p><i>Saturated fats:</i> animal fat, butter, full-fat dairy, coconut oil, and palm oil</p> <p><i>Trans-fats:</i> margarine and processed foods that contain hydrogenated or partially hydrogenated oils</p>	<p><i>Monounsaturated fats:</i> olive oil, canola oil, olives, avocado, nuts, and nut butters</p> <p><i>Omega-3 fats:</i> salmon, herring, sardines, mackerel, bluefish, and tuna</p>

Limit Your Sugar Intake

Sugar does not feed cancer, but it does lack many nutrients that offer health benefits. It can also promote undesired weight gain and, if eaten in excess, may lead to undesirable changes in insulin production and regulation, potentially leading to diabetes or other diseases. Try to limit your intake of sugar-sweetened beverages (such as soda, sports drinks, and fruit drinks) and high-sugar foods (such as pastries, candy, and sugar-sweetened breakfast cereals).



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Keep a Healthy Weight

It's important to maintain a healthy weight. Excess weight puts you at increased risk for cancer, diabetes, and heart disease. Research suggests that excess weight may also be associated with an increased risk of cancer recurrence and a decreased survival rate. Even if you don't achieve your "ideal" body weight, a healthy weight loss of 5-10% over six months to a year can reduce your risk for diseases like diabetes and heart disease.

A Look at Soy

Some evidence suggests that the intake of traditional or whole soy foods (such as tofu, edamame, and soy milk) may be linked to lower rates of cancer, heart disease, and osteoporosis.

- Although older studies suggested that high levels of soy may trigger growth of ER+ breast cancer cells, current studies suggest that moderate levels of soy intake appear to be safe for breast cancer survivors.
- There is less evidence about the safety of concentrated soy preparations, such as those found in soy protein powders or protein bars.

Alcohol: If You Choose to Drink, Moderation is Key

Research shows a link between drinking alcohol and the risk of developing breast cancer. There is less information about the relationship between alcohol intake and the risk of breast cancer recurrence in women with a history of breast cancer. Some data suggests that alcohol intake is linked to second breast cancers and a few studies suggest a link between regular alcohol intake and risk of breast cancer recurrence, but this has not been consistent. We recommend limiting alcohol intake to one drink or less per day for women.

One drink equals:

- 5 ounces of wine
- 12 ounces of beer
- 1.5 ounces of liquor

Organic Foods

There is mixed evidence regarding the connection between organic foods and risk of developing breast and other cancers. It is likely most important to ensure that you eat fruits and vegetables on a regular basis. The decision to eat organic foods is a personal choice.

For more nutrition information:

- "Ask the Nutritionist" smartphone app: Recipes and more. www.dana-farber.org/nutritionapp
- Nutrition Services at Dana-Farber: www.dana-farber.org/nutrition