



JULIE'S HEALTH CLUB

Where alternative and mainstream health meet

By Julie Deardorff

Daily wellness tip

Colon cancer patients who eat the infamous "Western Diet," which includes fatty foods, red meat, refined grains, and desserts may be increasing their chance of disease relapse and early death, according to a study in the Journal of the American Medical Association.



Here's how to use diet and lifestyle changes to reduce your risk of developing the disease, according to Keith I. Block, medical director of the Block Center for Integrative Cancer Treatment in Evanston, Illinois.

1. **Receive regular colorectal cancer screenings** beginning at age 50, assuming you have no known risk factors for the disease. If you are at higher risk – due to a family history of colon cancer, inflammatory bowel disease, or if you have a history of polyps in the colon – talk to your doctor about getting screened before the age of 50. Appropriate screening is extremely important, as the survival rate for people with colorectal cancers found early is more than 90 percent.
2. **Eat a diet rich in fiber, complex carbohydrates, fruits, vegetables and plant sources of protein.** Be sure to include plenty of cruciferous vegetables, as they have been shown to



block the growth of colon cancer tumors. Cruciferous vegetables include: arugula, broccoli, brussel sprouts, cabbage, kale, cauliflower, bok choy, turnip greens and mustard greens.

3. **Reduce, or better still, eliminate red meat from your diet.** Information coming out of countries with the highest levels of beef consumption, such as New Zealand and Scotland, also have among the highest colon cancer rates in the world. In addition, a large Harvard study of 80,000 nurses, reported in the New England Journal of Medicine, found that eating any kind of red meat on a daily basis resulted in a threefold increased risk of colon cancer.

4. **Reduce saturated fat intake.** Studies suggest that saturated fat, found in fatty meat and high fat dairy products, including ice cream, milk and cheese, may trigger increased production of insulin and growth factors that seem to promote colon tumor growth. In contrast, diets high in omega-3 fats found in fish such as salmon, albacore tuna and rainbow trout can decrease inflammation that may lead to colon cancer.
5. **Maintain a healthy weight and body composition.** Excess weight is strongly linked to colon cancer, especially for men, premenopausal women, and those with excess fat predominantly in the abdomen.
6. **Incorporate physical activity into your life.** Regular moderate activity such as brisk walking for 30 to 60 minutes a day doesn't just help with weight control, it can result in changes in various hormones and growth factors that reduce the risk of colon cancer.
7. **Don't smoke, or quit smoking, and only drink alcohol in moderation.**
8. **Increase your antioxidants** through a colorful selection of vegetables and fruits and reduce inflammation with cherries, fish and fish oil, and tumeric or its powerful anti-inflammatory phytochemical curcumin.
9. **Increase vitamin D intake.** Research has consistently demonstrated that men and women with high blood levels of vitamin D, as well as those who consume more of the vitamin from dietary sources, have a significantly reduced risk of colorectal cancer. In addition, there is solid data suggesting that calcium supplementation can lower colon cancer risk.
10. **Take probiotics.** Getting the right flora from probiotics like acidophilus can not only reduce your risk of getting colon cancer, but the risk of recurrence as well.