



April is National Cancer Control Month! It was designated as such to recognize the increased understanding about cancer, research advances made in the treatments for cancer, and in raising awareness and education for early detection and cancer prevention. Cancer is an umbrella term for more than 100 diseases. Cancer is characterized by an unrestrained, out of control, abnormal growth of cells that can spread locally or be transported through the bloodstream and lymphatic system to other parts of the body.

Early detection is essential for improved survival of patients diagnosed with cancer. The seven warning signs of cancer are: change in bowel or bladder habits; a sore that does not heal; unusual bleeding or discharge; thickening or lump in breast or elsewhere; indigestion or difficulty in swallowing; change in a mole or wart; and nagging cough or hoarseness. In the earliest stage of cancer, there are often no symptoms. Getting annual cancer screenings for the earliest detection of cancer can make a significant difference in survival outcome. Cancer prevention involves reducing the risks that can lead to the development of cancer. Genetics, lifestyle, and environmental factors all play a part in the development of cancer.

To date, the primary focus has been on early detection and treatment. The success of that focus is the nearly 10 million cancer survivors living today. However, according to the National Cancer Institute, at the current projected rates of cancer, one out of two men and one out of three women will be diagnosed with cancer in their lifetime. Three out of four American families will have at least one family member diagnosed with cancer.

To learn more about cancer prevention and control, see <http://www.cdc.gov/cancer/>

There is growing evidence that the foods we choose and our lifestyle habits can play a major role in cancer prevention. The American Institute for Cancer Research (AICR) funds research on diet and cancer prevention and educates the public on the results. They have published the following diet and health guidelines for cancer prevention. Find more information at their website http://www.aicr.org/site/PageServer?pagename=dc_home

1. Choose a diet rich in a variety of plant-based foods.
2. Eat plenty of vegetables and fruits.
3. Maintain a healthy weight and be physically active.

4. Drink alcohol only in moderation, if at all.
5. Select foods low in fat and salt.
6. Prepare and store foods safely.

Are there specific foods that fight cancer?

No single food or food substances can protect you against cancer, but the right combination of foods may offer protection. Evidence is mounting that the minerals, vitamins and phytochemicals in many plant foods interact to provide extra cancer protection. Choosing healthy foods, especially a diet rich in vegetables and fruits, gives your body the nutrients it needs for good health. That is why scientists recommend that at least 2/3 of your plate should be filled with vegetables, fruit, whole grains and beans. It's called "The New American Plate"—check it out!

http://www.aicr.org/site/PageServer?pagename=pub_nap_index_21

Similarly, maintaining a healthy weight and staying physically active have also been shown to be important in helping your body protect itself against cancer. **Eat right, stay active and watch your weight-- put them all together and they add up to a formula that can cut cancer risk by 30 to 40%.** Check out the AICR suggestions on a healthy way to reduce your weight.

http://www.aicr.org/site/PageServer?pagename=dc_oo_weight

Check out their many healthy recipes like whole grain pancakes and crunch veggie wrap at http://www.aicr.org/site/PageServer?pagename=dc_rc_home.

Springtime offers garden fresh greens which are packed with nutrients. Did you know the nutritional value of lettuce depends on the darkness of the green color? Spinach is the one that comes to mind first, but stretch yourself and try some of the other nutrient-rich greens such as collard greens, mustard greens, bok choy, kale and Swiss chard. They are rich in vitamins A and C and good sources of calcium, iron, folate and magnesium. The lutein and zeaxanthin they contain are believed to protect against cataracts and macular degeneration. A Harvard study found that magnesium containing foods such as spinach can help reduce the risk of Type 2 Diabetes. (I guess Popeye was a pretty health conscious guy!)

Attached is a springtime recipe for "Sunshine Salad" from the National Cancer Institute using fresh spinach and other fresh fruits and vegetables.

This month's lunch-and-learn was developed in response to what I hear from so many individuals, "But I don't have time to cook!" It will be Thursday April 13 from noon to 1 PM in 0331 Palmer (ground floor) and the title is "Avoid the Drive Through-Save Money

and Eat Healthy Even When You Don't Have Time to Cook!" focusing on batch cooking, freezer meals, quick meals, and slow cookers. If you'd like to register, respond to this e-mail or give me a call (4-9625).

Enjoy your weekend and think about cancer prevention and "The New American Plate" as you make your food selections!

Sally

Sally Barclay, MS RD LD
Nutrition Clinic for Employee Wellness
Iowa State University
133 MacKay Hall
Ames, IA 50011
(515) 294-9625
barclay@iastate.edu