Target insulin resistance for breast cancer!

This is a first step in the fight against breast cancer. In fact, insulin resistance is also the underlying mechanism for most cases of type 2 diabetes, heart disease, stroke, and dementia, just for a start. (See pages 61–65 in Good Food, Great Medicine.) Following are four strategies to reverse insulin resistance:

1. **Waistline:** Reducing excess weight around the middle is associated with improved survival and lower cancer recurrence rates. Weight management can be more challenging for people with cancer because of medications and treatments that can cause weight gain or loss. (See Eating well during cancer treatment on page 18.)

2. **The whole food Mediterranean approach:** If you aren’t already eating this way, start now! Eat vegetables and/or whole fruit with every meal & snack to get your servings up to nine daily. Include beans and intact (or minimally processed) whole grains, and unprocessed animal protein like oil-rich fish 3–4 times per week. Eat moderate amounts of other animal proteins (like eggs and poultry), and up to 1.5 pounds of red meat per week (raw weight). Eat good fats – extra-virgin olive oil, raw nuts (especially walnuts), oilseeds (such as flax, sunflower, and pumpkin seeds), and cultured dairy foods like aged cheese, yogurt, and kefir. (Buy plain and unsweetened and add your own honey and berries.)

3. **Sugars and starches:** When dealing with reduced appetite, nausea, chemo brain, and fatigue, it’s too easy to turn to comforting and convenient foods with sugar and refined grains. Improve breast cancer outcomes and reduce recurrence by avoiding sugar and limiting foods made with flour. (See Extract your sweet tooth on page 73 and Eliminate refined grains on page 76.)

4. **Daily exercise:** Scheduling exercise every day improves overall survival and reduces side effects from cancer treatment as well as helping maintain lean muscle mass. It also improves hormone levels, is anti-inflammatory and anti-oxidant, enhances immunity, and reduces insulin resistance. (See Lets move more on pages 50–55, especially Exercise reduces cancer risk and improves outcomes on page 52.)
Breast cancer controversies?
- Dairy foods\(^4\) are associated with less, not more, breast cancer, but stick with cultured dairy foods.
- Whole traditional soy foods\(^5\) seem to help prevent breast cancer, reduce the risk of recurrence, and improve survival. Avoid highly refined soy products like soy protein powders and commercial soy milk.
- One alcoholic drink a day\(^6\) is associated with better overall survival in women with breast cancer. Keep to 1 glass of red wine (5 ounces) daily, with a meal.

(More detailed information for cancer survivors and those who want to avoid cancer can be found in Good Food, Great Medicine, and there is a cancer prevention and survivorship handout on our website.)

Got roasted cabbage?

The proportions of 2/3 vegetables and 1/3 meat modeled on the plate above illustrates one of the more practical ways to reduce insulin resistance. If you’re looking for food that will stand up and fight cancer with you, you’ve come to the right plate – especially if you’re not a cook: there are few vegetables as useful or rewarding as the humble, hardworking green cabbage. It keeps for weeks in your refrigerator without complaining, and except for the core, the whole head can be used. For the roasted version above, chop the cabbage into roughly 1-inch chunks, toss with extra-virgin olive oil, sprinkle generously with salt and freshly ground pepper, and then roast on a sheet pan at 450 degrees for 20 minutes or until the cabbage starts to look toasty and even blackened on the edges. Yum!

Good Food, Great Medicine classes

The two-part class series targets weight loss, insulin resistance, and type 2 diabetes, and details steps for preventing or reversing them. The classes are based on the 3\(^{rd}\) edition of Good Food, Great Medicine, which each participant will receive at the first class.

Good Food, Great Medicine class (part 1):
- Review inter-relationship of excess waistline and weight, insulin resistance (common to most cases of type 2 diabetes), and common chronic diseases.
- Discuss the role of the “key three” – a whole food Mediterranean diet, daily activity, and enough sleep.
- Work through the 14 simple steps that target your risk factors and produce effective, lasting change in your waistline, blood sugar, and other health risks.

Good Food, Great Medicine class (part 2):
- Explore practical application of whole food choices and menu planning. See demonstrations of a couple of foundational recipes from Good Food, Great Medicine. Review progress, find solutions to challenges, and fine-tune personal action plans.

Time: 6 – 8 pm Wednesday
Dates: 4/6/16 (Part 1) and 4/13/16 (Part 2)
Location: Providence St. Vincent Medical Center
Cost: $100 (2-class series)
Registration: Call 503.291.1777 to reserve a spot

Dr. Hassell’s speaking events

http://komenoregon.org/

Sign up for this free monthly food and lifestyle newsletter at Goodfoodgreatmedicine.com

“Prove all things; hold fast that which is good.”
1 Thessalonians 5:21 (KJV)

2016 © Miles Hassell MD