

## April 2011 Newsletter



One of the tastiest cancer-fighting collaborations we know is *Warm Lentil Salad*. (You can find the recipe on page 166 of *Good Food, Great Medicine*.)

### Battling cancer in the kitchen

Cancer is a worrisome diagnosis for any of us to face but there are many things we can do using our own kitchens to reduce our risk – as well as improve the outcome if we *do* have cancer. Here are ten evidence-based approaches to consider.

#### 1. Eat Mediterranean<sup>1</sup>

**The Mediterranean diet is associated with 40-60% less cancer** – and marked reductions in type 2 diabetes, heart disease, stroke, and dementia. Start now! Choose food mainly from plant sources: fresh or cooked vegetables as part of every meal, fresh whole fruit, raw nuts and seeds, beans, and grains. Use extra-virgin olive oil as your main kitchen oil, include good aged cheese and yogurt as main sources of dairy, and eat more fish.

#### 2. Eat good fat, not low fat

**The Mediterranean diet is not a low-fat diet!** It is rich in good fats like phenol-rich extra-virgin olive oil, nuts and oil seeds (sesame, sunflower, flax, and pumpkin seeds), avocados, and oil-rich fish.

- Eat up to a couple of handfuls of raw nuts per day. Keep nut butters to a minimum.

- Eat fish like salmon, tuna, and sardines a few times a week, or consider taking a fish or cod liver oil supplement.

#### 3. Eat your pound of vegetables<sup>2</sup>

Evidence supports at least one pound each day, so vegetables are the one group of foods in which you can feel completely free to indulge with an unrestrained passion. Aim for a goal of nine servings of vegetables and fruit in meals and snacks daily, with an emphasis on vegetables. Eat as wide a variety as you can – and whole, not juiced! Fruit juices lead to more diabetes and obesity, and juicing eliminates most phenolics, vitamins, minerals, and micronutrients.

- If you have a rocky relationship with vegetables, start with the ones you like, raw or cooked. Need some more ideas? Read chapter 8 in *Good Food, Great Medicine*, especially the section on roasted vegetables starting on page 123.
- Some vegetables and fruits may be more beneficial than others. Aim for dark greens, anything in the cabbage family (like broccoli, kale, bok choy), onions, garlic, mushrooms, berries, and citrus fruit.
- Frozen can be almost as good as fresh, but read the labels of canned vegetables and fruit carefully to avoid sweetening and other enhancements.

#### 4. Eat your grains whole

To give yourself the absolute maximum benefit, stick to grains that are either whole (like the crock-pot oatmeal we featured in our March newsletter) or minimally processed, like a heavy, moist sprouted grain bread or European sourdough rye bread, both of which you can find refrigerated in some markets. Replace white bread, white pastas, and white rice with whole grains and brown rice.

#### 5. Eat beans and legumes most days<sup>3</sup>

This includes lentils, split peas, dried peas (black-eyed peas, chickpeas) and beans of all kinds (black,

<sup>1</sup> Sofi, F. *AJCN* 2010;92:1189-96

<sup>2</sup> AICR 2007

<sup>3</sup> Manios, *Mediterranean Diet as Nutrition Education and Dietary Guide*, *Forum Nutr* 2006

pinto, navy, white, red, soy, etc). Beans are a complete protein when eaten with whole grains. As for soybean products, stick to traditional soy foods like edamame (fresh soybeans) and tofu.

## 6. Go easy on the red meat

The American Institute for Cancer Research suggests limiting red meat to less than 18 ounces per week.<sup>4</sup> The bright side of this recommendation is that you'll have more room on your plate for cancer-fighting vegetables. Grass fed meat is probably superior; wild things like venison and elk might be even better.

## 7. Favor cultured dairy

Dairy foods in their generally unprocessed form can be part of a healthy diet. The evidence favors cultured dairy foods such as aged cheese, plain yogurt and kefir (a yogurt-like cultured milk drink) rather than milk itself.

- Two or three servings per day are probably a reasonable maximum, and should be enough to supply your calcium needs.
- It is OK to eat either low-fat or whole-fat dairy. However, a strong case can be made against sugar delivery systems *disguised* as dairy foods: for example, an eight-ounce container of pre-sweetened non-fat yogurt can include as much as 6 – 8 teaspoons of added sugar! As usual, always read ingredient labels.
- Probiotic-rich *plain* yogurt and kefir (sweeten them with fresh fruit and honey) contain live microorganisms that provide a health benefit. We like the locally-produced *Nancy's* brand the best.

## 8. Minimize sweeteners, sweets, and sweet drinks (including juices)

Whole fresh fruit and honey (preferably raw local honey) are probably the optimal unprocessed sweetening options. Avoid all refined sweeteners, including agave nectar and artificial sweeteners.

## 9. Get a waist!

The weight you carry around your middle is more hazardous for heart disease, diabetes, and some cancers than weight elsewhere on your body. So if you are overweight, general weight loss is not as important as being fit and losing inches around your waist. (For some weight loss tips, see pages 26 – 30 of *Good Food, Great Medicine*.)

## 10. Exercise daily!<sup>5</sup>

Fresh air and natural light are also beneficial, so you may have to leave your kitchen for this one. Something as simple as a brisk thirty-minute walk is a great idea. If your job requires a lot of sitting, make a point of moving around frequently. **Daily exercise is associated with less cancer, and better survival in those with cancer.**

## Research update

The second phase of our study using yogurt, glutamine and honey to reduce radiation damage during cancer therapy is starting soon. Safeway has offered to match up to \$25,000 in gifts to fund the project. For information about this study please contact the Providence St. Vincent Medical Center Medical Foundation at (503) 216-2227.

## KOIN Studio 6

Dr. Hassell appeared on KOIN TV's Studio 6 on April 4<sup>th</sup> with Stephan B, who reversed his diabetes and lost 70 pounds by simply applying the steps we've just discussed in this newsletter. He says his source of information and inspiration was the cookbook and lifestyle guide written by Dr. Hassell and his sister Mea, *Good Food, Great Medicine*. Dr. Hassell's next appearance is May 2<sup>nd</sup>. The program airs 4 - 5pm.

## Upcoming Speaking Events

**4/4/2011 and 4/5/2011 – 25th Annual Advanced Cardiovascular Symposium:** Miles Hassell MD: *Preventing Ischemic Heart Disease: Is Lifestyle More Potent Than Drugs?* Oregon Zoo, Portland, Oregon.

**4/6/2011 – Pastoral Care Staff Meeting:** Miles Hassell MD: Providence Portland Medical Center, Portland, Oregon.

**5/3/2011 – NEXT Steps against Cancer:** Miles Hassell MD and Ken Weizer ND: *Nutrition, Exercise, & Natural Medicine to Reduce Risk, Enhance Survival and Improve Quality of Life.* Providence Willamette Falls Medical Center, Oregon City, Oregon. Preregister at *Providence Resource Line*: 503.574.6595.

**5/13/2011 – Oregon State Council of PeriOperative Nurses:** Miles Hassell MD: *Chocolate & Wine: Their Role in Good Health.* Oregon Gardens, Silverton, Oregon.

*"Prove all things; hold fast that which is good."*  
1 Thess. 5:21(KJV)

<sup>4</sup> AICR 2007

<sup>5</sup> AICR 2007