

Pink tips: How to prevent breast cancer

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04/10/2010 12:33:00

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During this Breast Cancer Awareness Month or the pink month, we offer the following for those who are interested in knowing some tips on how to really prevent breast cancer. Remember, breast cancer in many cases is preventable – preventing it in the first place is preferable over being diagnosed through screening beginning at age 40, then having to be subjected to traditional chemotherapy and radiation once the disease develops.

As always, the best approach is to prevent the disease from developing in the first place, which you know is possible if you are an avid reader. We respect all people who wear pink to support breast cancer survivors and encourage women to participate in breast cancer screening. But we believe every woman needs to do their home work to defend against the disease themselves.

To prevent breast cancer, every person needs to know as many risk factors as he or she can and try to avoid them. American Cancer Society suggests on its website that some risk factors are modifiable and some are not.

The unmodifiable risk factors that boost the risk of breast cancer, according to American Cancer Society, include gender (females get more breast cancer); aging; genetic risk factors (BRCA1 and BRCA2); genetic variants (ATM, p53, CHEK2, PTEN, CDH1); family history of breast cancer; personal history of breast cancer; race and ethnicity; dense breast tissue, and certain benign breast conditions; lobular carcinoma in situ; more menstrual periods or early puberty; previous chest conditions and diethylstilbestrol exposure.

Some of these so-called unmodifiable factors are actually controllable. For instance, genetic variants can be controlled by adjusting a person's diet and lifestyle. Just because you have a relative who has breast cancer or you carry certain genetic mutations does not mean you have suffer with cancer. It is clear that lifestyle and

[diet](#) can influence risk from faulty genetics. That is, we need to know something about epigenetics.

According to the ACS, modifiable factors that boost the risk of breast cancer, include having children late in or having no children; using oral contraceptives or hormone therapy; not breast feeding; drinking alcohol; being overweight or obese and physical inactivity.

Some factors that may or may not affect the risk of breast cancer, according to the ACS, include diet and vitamin intake, antiperspirants, wearing bras, induced abortion, breast implants, chemicals in the environment, tobacco smoke, and working at night or overnight.

Foodconsumer.org has extensively reported on studies that suggest certain lifestyle parameters may boost or reduce the risk of breast cancer.

The following may reduce breast cancer risk: kelp; forsteronia refracta compound; oleic acid in olive oil restricted calories; apple, Danggui Longhui Wan (chinese medicine); moderate exercise; turmeric, fish oil, [weight loss](#), omega-3 fatty acids, cabbage and sauerkraut; Artemisinin; vitamin D, soy, garlic, grape juice, whole wheat, pro-vitamin E, low-protein diet, doing home work, high dietary fiber, broccoli, breastfeeding, grapes, green tea and mushroom, vitamin c, and sun exposure.

Those factors that may boost risk are: high GI diet, alcohol, adipose fat, Bisphenol A; cleaning chemicals, [hormone therapy](#), french fries, omega 6 fatty acid linoleic acid found in corn and soybean oil; mamograms, dietary fat, red meat and processed meat, barbecued meat, grapefruit, western diet, aluminum salts, radiation, iron, [antibiotics](#), calcium, living in a large, metropolitan area, and acrylamide.

We advise that readers should read the full reports for more details about the studies to fully understand how these factors affect the risk of breast cancer.

In a word, there are many things a person can do to reduce his or her breast cancer risk. Along with wearing pink to support breast awareness month, we hope readers will arm themselves with all relevant information regarding the disease. You don't have to wait to develop the disease and then seek medical attention to get it removed or treated. At least that is not the best course of action.

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