

# NUTRITION NEWS

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## Breast Cancer Awareness Month

October is Breast Cancer Awareness Month. We know more about this disease than we ever have before. And we are continuing to learn more every day.

According to the CDC (Centers for Disease Control), breast cancer is the most common cancer in women, regardless of your race or ethnicity. (except for skin cancers) And according to the American Cancer Society, the estimates for breast cancer are as follows:

- \* About 253,000 new cases of invasive breast cancer will be diagnosed
- \* About 63,500 new cases of non-invasive (less advanced) breast cancer will be diagnosed
- \* And more than 40,000 women will die from breast cancer this year

Breast cancer is the second leading cause of cancer death in women. Only lung cancer kills more women annually.

Death rates from breast cancer dropped between the years of 1989 and 2007. Since 2007 however, breast cancer rates have stayed relatively stable in women under the age of 50. The death rates have continued to decrease in women over the age of 50. This is thought to be due to earlier detection thanks in part to routine screening. Better treatment options have also played a role in the decrease in death rates.

Research continues to focus on improving treatment for those diagnosed with breast cancer. However, research is also looking at ways of reducing the risk of developing the disease. This includes hormone therapy drugs, dietary supplements (including linoleic acid, folate, omega 3 fatty acids, and vitamins B6 and D), and other medications including statins (used to treat high cholesterol) and NSAIDS (used to treat fever, pain, and inflammation).

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### Monthly Exercise

Sit in a chair, place your toes and the balls of your feet on the floor . Lift your heels and then place them back on the floor. Repeat 20 times.

As you now know, there is a link between nutrition and certain types of cancers. Breast cancer is one of the cancers that have showed the strongest link between nutrition and the development of the disease. So how can you reduce your risk?

The following lifestyle changes have been shown to decrease your risk of breast cancer even in high risk women.

- ◆ Limit alcohol– the more alcohol you drink, the greater your risk of developing breast cancer. The general recommendation is to limit yourself to less than 1 drink per day.
- ◆ Don't smoke– accumulating evidence suggests a link between smoking and breast cancer risk, especially in premenopausal women.
- ◆ Control your weight– being overweight or obese increases the risk of breast cancer. This is especially true if obesity occurs later in life, particularly after menopause.

Have you heard of the connection between soy and breast cancer? A recent study found that soy foods lower the risk of breast cancer, especially in premenopausal women. One to two servings of soy foods daily is recommended. A serving of soy is any one of the following: 1/3 cup soy nuts, 1/2 cup edamame, or 1 cup soy milk.

Soy foods can be nutritious. They are considered a complete protein and are good sources of calcium, manganese, and selenium.

There has also been speculation that a Mediterranean diet can prevent breast cancer. It has long been recognized that this type of diet can protect against heart disease. Women in Mediterranean countries generally have lower rates of breast cancer when compared with women in Europe and the US.



The Mediterranean diet incorporates the basics of healthy eating (increased fruits, vegetables, and grains) while emphasizing the importance of certain types of fats. Here are some other key points:

- \* Eating primarily plant-based foods, such as fruits, vegetables, whole grains, legumes, and nuts
- \* Replacing butter with healthy fats such as olive oil and canola oil
- \* Using herbs and spices instead of salt to flavor foods
- \* Limiting red meat to no more than a few times a month
- \* Eating fish and poultry at least twice a week
- \* Enjoying meals with family and friends
- \* Drinking red wine in moderation (optional)
- \* Getting plenty of exercise

Also remember to choose low fat dairy options to incorporate into the diet. Again, because this diet is a moderate diet rich in fruits and vegetables, it is easy to see why this diet may promote your overall welling.

In addition to being Breast Cancer Awareness Month, October is also Eat Better, Eat Together Month. What a great endorsement for our congregate dining sites!

The benefits of eating with a companion or a group are well documented, as are the detriments to eating alone. People who eat alone often consume inadequate protein, calories, and fluid. Their meals may be less balanced as it is harder to prepare a large meal for one person. Dining out in restaurants also becomes less frequent and more difficult as any people do not want to be seen dining in public alone.

Many of our social situations involve food. If you are planning a get-together, reach out to your neighbor who may be used to eating most of their meals alone. Many of our seniors live in apartments— come down to our meal sites! Parkside Courts, Mid-Town, Scott House, Rockton Plaza, and London Towers are all conveniently located in senior housing developments. But that doesn't mean that you have to live there to take advantage of our congregate sites. Drive over for a meal or two and appreciate not only a nutritious meal, but some good company as well.

If you meet some friends in similar social situations, you may be able to make arrangements to eat an evening meal with them as well. Use a community room at a local senior housing complex to eat with a group. Or make a plan to have dinner with one other friend and share the cooking! One of you can bring the entrée while the other brings a side, and then you can make a plan to do the opposite the next time.

I mentioned the benefits to the elderly of eating with others. Here are some of the specific advantages to eating in a group, with a family, or even with one other companion.

According to research, in social settings, seniors tend to eat more and make better food choices when with others. While alone, it may be easier to turn to a frozen, overly processed meal. A warm environment that fosters conversation can also augment intake. Because eating with others tends to take longer, hydration may also improve. If you are lingering over a table, it is easy to sip on a beverage while hardly noticing that you're doing it!

Malnutrition in the elderly is becoming more and more common and has lasting impacts. If you are malnourished, the health ramifications are far reaching. Healing a fractured hip takes longer when you have poor intake. Fighting off a nasty winter cold or the flu becomes more difficult if you are malnourished. And poor nutrition can also play a role in one's mental status. Eating a well balanced diet can help keep your memory sharp, your faculties intact, and your cognition working at its highest level.

Bringing someone a meal is a wonderful thing to do— sitting down to share in the



meal with them can have lasting effects that you may not even be aware of!

Here is an example of Mediterranean style recipe! Enjoy!

**Zucchini Artichoke Summer Salad**

**2 skinless, boneless chicken breast halves**

**Salt and ground black pepper to taste**

**6 tbs olive oil, divided**

**4 zucchini, cut into 1 1/2 inch sticks**

**1 (15 ounce) can garbanzo beans, drained and rinsed**

**1 (6 ounce) can black olives, drained and sliced**

**1 (14 ounce) can artichoke hearts, drained and chopped**

**1/2 cup grated Parmesan cheese**

Season both sides of chicken breasts with salt and black pepper.

Heat 2 tbs olive oil in a skillet over medium heat; cook chicken breasts in the hot oil until they are no longer pink in the center and juices run clear, 5 to 10 minutes per side. Cut chicken into 1/2 inch cubes and transfer to a large bowl.

Heat remaining 4 tbs olive oil in the same skillet over medium heat; cook and stir zucchini in the hot oil until slightly tender, about 5 minutes. Season with salt and black pepper. Transfer zucchini to a paper towel-lined plate to drain.

Mix zucchini, garbanzo beans, olives, artichoke hearts, and Parmesan cheese with chicken; toss to combine. Chill in refrigerator before serving, about one hour.

**HEAP**

The 2023-2024 HEAP season is scheduled to open on Nov. 1st, 2023.



The income guidelines for this year are as follows:

Household of 1: \$3,035

Household of 2: \$3,970

Household of 3: \$4,904

The HEAP Program also offers the Clean and Tune Program and Furnace Repair and Replace Program.

If you have any questions please contact the office at 867-1195.

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