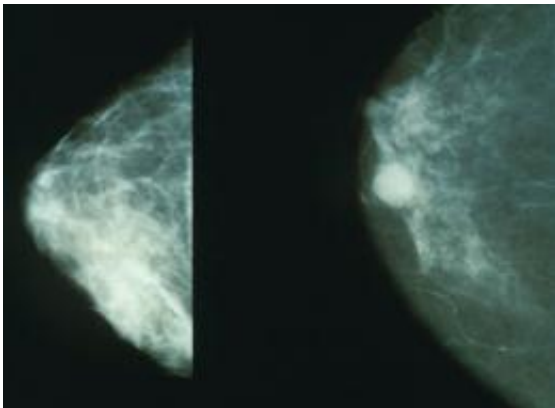


Nutrition education may help prevent breast cancer reoccurrence

January 5 2015



Mammograms showing a normal breast (left) and a cancerous breast (right).
Credit: Wikipedia.

Breast cancer is the most frequent cause of death among women worldwide, and five-year survival rates are just 58.4% in Brazil, lower than in many other regions. In a new study, however, researchers from Federal University of Santa Catarina provided Brazilian breast cancer patients with nutrition education and found it could benefit patients and may help prevent reoccurrence of the cancer.

Eighteen patients were included in the [intervention group](#) in this study, which was compared with a 75-patient control group. Over 12 months, the patients in the intervention group were educated about proper nutrition, asked to record their food consumption on a calendar, and

contacted via phone by the researchers to learn about their food consumption and offer recommendations for improvement. Patients in the intervention group also attended meetings and received a monthly bulletin to further their [nutrition education](#).

The main goals of the nutrition education were to reduce the patients' consumption of red and processed meat and increase fruit and vegetable intake. These goals were selected because red and processed meats are purported to have a negative effect on [cancer patients](#) and the antioxidant effects of fruit and vegetables have been shown to help reduce the aggravating effects of chemotherapy treatment and, consequently, may reduce the risk of cancer reoccurrence.

"Although the sample size was small and data were collected at different times, this study provides evidence that [women](#) undergoing [breast cancer](#) treatment might benefit from immediate, individualized and detailed nutrition monitoring," lead author Cecilia C. Schiavon, MsC, concluded.

The researchers based their conclusions on the fact that patients in the intervention group showed significant reductions in red and processed meat, consuming 50% less than peers in the comparison group. Comparison group patients also had two-times greater body weight increase during the study. Both red and processed meat consumption and body weight increases have been linked with increased oxidative stress, which has been shown to affect increased cancer recurrence. Fruit and vegetable intake was also increased among the intervention group and likely helped those patients limit BMI, unlike the comparison group, which had three times higher BMI over the course of the study.

Despite limitations in the study, including sample size, the study not being random, and data being collected at different times between groups (control and intervention group), the findings are promising. Further studies should be conducted to verify the conclusions of the

authors of this study.

More information: "Nutrition Education Intervention for Women with Breast Cancer: Effect on Nutritional Factors and Oxidative Stress," by Cecilia C. Schiavon, MsC; Francilene G. K. Vieira, PhD; Vanessa Ceccatto, MsC; Sheyla de Liz, MsC; Alyne L. Cardoso, MsC; Cristiane Sabel, BHSc; David A. Gonzalez-Chica, PhD; Edson L. da Silva, PhD; Daisy Galvan, MsC; Carlos G. Crippa, PhD; Patricia F. Di Pietro, PhD (DOI: [dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.jneb.2014.09.005](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jneb.2014.09.005)), *Journal of Nutrition Education and Behavior*, Volume 47/Issue 1, January-February 2015

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