

# THE INTEGRATIVE NUTRITION APPROACH TO CANCER SURVIVORSHIP

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## I. Introduction

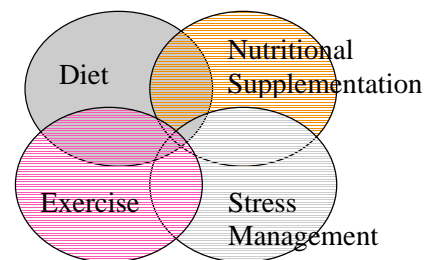
- Myrna Brind Center of Integrative Medicine description
- Integrative Nutrition Model
- Integrative Nutrition and Cancer Survivorship
- Moving Forward – practical suggestions for taking the next step

## II. Integrative Medicine Description and Approaches to Cancer

- Our philosophy of patient care: We recognize that illness and healing involve all aspects of ourselves – biological, psychological, social and spiritual. We seek to create therapeutic partnerships that are compassionate and attuned to the unique needs of every patient. We know that each person can be empowered to bring greater wellness into his or her life.
- Therapies can strengthen and support overall health. (A specific example is immune function.)
- Effective therapies are available for common cancer-related symptoms such as nausea, pain and anxiety.
- Every individual is unique, and requires recommendations and approaches that will best serve their situation.
- Nourishing the spirit is extremely important. Religion, art, community service and meditative practice are just a few of the paths to experiencing a greater sense of connection.
- Each patient should take full advantage of ongoing strong relationships with their oncologist, cancer surgeon, primary care physician, and other practitioners and/or members of their supportive team.

## III. Integrative Nutrition Model

- Diet
- Nutritional Supplements
- Exercise
- Relaxation Techniques: e.g. yoga, meditation, biofeedback, tai chi, etc.
- Other – individual approaches



## IV. Nutrition and Cancer – Review of Literature

- Prevention vs. complementary approaches – most research has identified nutritional factors that prevent cancer. These factors may also be used to complement standard therapeutic approaches.
- Maintain a healthy weight
- Avoid nutritional deficiencies through a healthy diet and a multivitamin and mineral

- Macronutrients:
  - Low fat: 15-30% of calories. Should be natural fats found in food – i.e. olive oil, nuts and seeds, tofu, etc.
  - Less animal fat or saturated fat – more fish with omega 3 fatty acids and more beans or legumes
  - Complex carbohydrates are good but minimize simple sugars – will help reduce insulin levels that may influence tumor growth
  - Minimize chemicals and xenobiotics – these are environmental chemicals such as pesticides, and are actually associated with high fat foods
- Other dietary recommendations/considerations
  - 5-7 vegetables and fruit per day
  - Carotenoids – boost immune function (in brightly colored vegetables and fruit)
  - High fiber – found in natural foods and complex carbohydrates important for healthy diets
  - Cruciferous vegetables – indole-3 carbinol and sulphoraphanes which help promote detoxification and influence estrogen activity
  - Flax seeds – contain lignans and omega 3 fatty acids which may inhibit estrogen activity and influence immune function
  - Garlic – contains allium and allyl sulfides which stimulate immune function and detoxification enzymes
  - Green Tea – contains polyphenols and catechins which have antioxidant activity and may inhibit tumor growth
  - Soybeans – contain isoflavones (genistein, daidzein) which have antioxidant activity, and inhibit estrogen activity in premenopausal women and testosterone in men
  - Shiitake mushrooms – promote immune function
  - Turmeric – contains curcumin which may inhibit tumor growth and promote detoxification
  - Tomatoes – contain lycopene (carotenoid) which has antioxidant activity
  - Alcohol – daily intake increases risks for some cancers including breast, head, neck and liver cancer
- Nutritional supplementation – should be individualized and discussed with practitioners

## **V. More Research of Nutritional Effects in Cancer Treatment is Needed**

### **VI. Specific Dietary Guidelines**

- See handout – Foods Included on the ‘Anti-Cancer’ Diet
- Use symptoms to optimize diet (and nutritional supplements, relaxation techniques, exercise, etc.)

### **VII. Taking the Next Step: An Approach to Cancer Survivorship**

- Make lifestyle as happy and healthy as possible
- Optimize daily diet and nutritional supplement regimen
- Exercise each day – aerobics or weights, or yoga or tai chi, walking, etc.
- Do mindfulness meditation or guided imagery or visualization every day
- Gather a healing team to include MDs, nutritionist, massage therapist, etc. and a support network of family and friends
- Spiritual practice/Prayer
- Passionate, meaningful involvement; Laughter; Service