

Wellness Ways

The Methodist Hospital, Corporate Wellness • 713.441.5978 • www.methodistcorporatwellness.com

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Beat the Odds With Proactive Prostate Health

Former U.S. Secretary of State Colin Powell had it. So did U.S. Senators Bob Dole and John Kerry. They are members in a long list of well-known American men diagnosed and successfully treated for prostate cancer.

But there's another long list of those who didn't catch the killer in time. American poet Robert Frost died of the disease in the '60s. Rock musician Frank Zappa was only 52 years old when he died from complications related to prostate cancer in 1993.

Besides some skin cancers, prostate cancer is the most common type of cancer in America, expected to affect nearly 190,000 U.S. men in 2008 and kill 28,000. One in six men is diagnosed with the disease, according to the Prostate Cancer Foundation.

Early detection – prior to the onset of symptoms – is a key factor in treating and curing the disease. Two important screening tests can help detect the disease before it's too late.

- The PSA (prostate-specific antigen) blood test measures an enzyme produced only by the prostate. Men with a PSA of 2.5 or higher likely will be referred for further testing, including a biopsy.

- The dreaded DRE (digital rectal exam) is fodder for jokes, but it's actually a quick – if slightly inconvenient – check of the rectum with a doctor's gloved and lubricated finger to examine the back part of the prostate for size and any irregularity.

Doctors' recommendations are not uniform when it comes to determining when men should start screening. According to the National Cancer Institute, some physicians recommend annual screening for all men over 50, while those with risk factors – including a family history of the disease – may be encouraged to begin screening for prostate cancer at age 40 or 45. The most common risk factor is age, and the majority of prostate cancer cases are diagnosed in men over 65. Race is also a factor, with African American men having the highest rate of prostate cancer.

Methodist Wellness Services: Working For YOU

September is National Prostate Cancer Awareness Month and a good time to schedule a routine prostate screening through Methodist Wellness Services. Men over 50 – and those over 40 with risk factors – are especially encouraged (see related story on this page) to take this important step toward good prostate practices. The finger stick prostate specific antigen test – better known as PSA – is available for just \$34. The blood draw PSA is available for \$45. Check our website (www.methodistwellness.com) for more information and make September a prostate testing month each year – starting in 2008.

Friendly Foods in the Fight to Prevent Prostate Cancer Tomatoes, Watermelon and Pink Grapefruit Play Starring Roles

Each year, researchers add to the body of evidence suggesting links between certain foods and disease. Long-term studies show some foods help cause diseases, while others may help prevent them. The tempting red tomato is big news on the nutrition front today, with recent research suggesting its protective powers may increase after processing and heating.



A phytochemical called lycopene is responsible for tomatoes' rich red color. According to National Cancer Institute estimates, about 85 percent of Americans' lycopene intake comes from tomatoes and tomato products.

But lycopene also is found in watermelon, pink grapefruit, guava, papaya and apricots. Researchers have found that this compound and its relatives tend to collect in prostate tissues, and they have concluded that lycopene likely offers men protection against prostate cancer.

Lycopene's super power comes from its ability to zap free radicals, the unstable molecules in our bodies that become electrically charged and can react with other molecules, causing damage and even disease. Because it is an antioxidant, lycopene neutralizes free radicals via normal cell processes and renders them powerless.

An American Institute for Cancer Research (AICR) expert report judged lycopene as a source of "probable decreased risk" for prostate cancer. And while the AICR emphasizes that no single food, food substance or supplement can protect people against cancer, it does recommend a diet in which two thirds of the nutrients are supplied by vegetables, fruits, whole grains and beans.

A recent study by Ohio State University's Comprehensive Cancer Center investigated a theory that the bloodstream more easily absorbs lycopene after tomatoes are processed, combined with fat and super heated. Molecules in fresh tomatoes have a linear layout, but after intense heating – and combined with a small amount of oil – the molecular structure bends, somehow allowing the body to absorb it easier and faster and send it on to body tissues.

Researchers tested two tomato sauces, both combined with corn oil, and found that the super heated sauce increased the amount of lycopene absorbed in 12 research participants by 55 percent. To read more, visit the following Website:

<http://www.ag.ohio-state.edu/~news/story.php?id=4789>

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Food processing generally gets booed for stripping nutrients and taste from its subjects, but, at least in the tomato world, it appears to improve the food's benefits. Ongoing studies also seek scientific evidence to support the idea that Vitamin E, selenium (a mineral found in some soils and absorbed by eating rice and wheat grown in those soils) and legumes – particularly soybeans and their offspring – also help prevent development of prostate cancer.



The AICR also recommends garlic as part of a healthy cancer-fighting diet. Laboratory studies have shown garlic components may slow or stop tumor growth in the prostate, bladder, colon and stomach. Garlic is among a vegetable group referred to as Allium, which also includes leeks, onions, scallions and chives.

For more information on foods that fight cancer, see the AICR Website: www.aicr.org

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A Prostate Friendly Menu

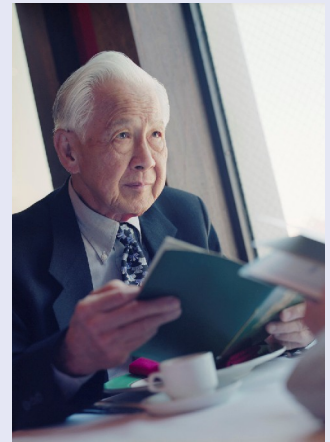
Diet is all about choices.

Too often we tend to follow the path of least resistance. A long day at work can easily manipulate us to call pizza delivery or stop at a fast food drive-through for instant satisfaction.

But what fills up our stomachs can leave our nutrition needs unfulfilled.

Remember – habits are choices, too, and putting some thought and creativity into planning daily menus can help change bad habits into good ones.

Planning the components of a weekly menu ahead of time turns meals into celebrations instead of pig-outs.



As scientists continue to accumulate evidence of foods that fight cancers, it's easy to add some of the good guys to the weekly shopping list. Here is a one-day menu sample that includes some of the top foods on the anti-prostate cancer list:

BREAKFAST

- 6 ounces pomegranate juice
- 1 to 1 ½ cups whole grain cereal topped with handful of chopped Brazil nuts, raspberries and skim milk
- 1 cup green tea

LUNCH

- 1 cup fresh broccoli and cauliflower stir-fried in olive oil and crushed garlic (NOTE: easy to prepare ahead of time and heat up at work)
- ¼ pound turkey burger on wheat bun with red cabbage and Italian dressing vegetable juice
- 1 cup fresh strawberries sprinkled with 1 teaspoon flax-seeds and plain yogurt

DINNER

- 8 ounces broiled salmon served over wheat pasta and tomato sauce
- (stir up a favorite sauce recipe and let it simmer a few hours; be sure to add plenty of fresh garlic and some olive oil)
- fresh salad that includes a scattering of kale and mustard greens with favorite dark green lettuce, red onions, chopped yellow pepper, watercress & scallions
- ½ cup steamed broccoli with yogurt-based butter
- Dessert? One huge slice of watermelon