

Reduce Your Risk of Cancer— *Naturally*
by Making Smarter Choices at Home and When You Shop
by Dr. Kathryn Brooks

Cancer is among one of the fastest growing health concerns in the world. Most people today have a family member or friend who has been diagnosed with cancer, died from cancer or who is a cancer survivor. According to the American Cancer society approximately 1,660,209 new cancer cases will be diagnosed in 2013. Every-year money is poured into organizations vowing to find a cure for cancer, yet there is little to no effort educating people on reducing cancer risk and prevention. The American Cancer Society states, “Anyone can develop cancer. All cancers involve the malfunction of genes that control cell growth and division. About 5% of all cancers are strongly hereditary, in that an inherited genetic alteration confers a very high risk of developing one or more specific types of cancer. However, most cancers do not result from inherited genes but from damage to genes occurring during one’s lifetime. Genetic damage may result from internal factors, such as hormones or the metabolism of nutrients within cells, or external factors, such as tobacco, or excessive exposure to chemicals, sunlight, or ionizing radiation.” It is known that our environment, including bringing the outside environment to the inside of our body (through food and drink consumption) has the potential for causing detrimental effects over extended periods of time. There is little emphasis placed on the importance of quality nutrition. Every cell in the body has a specific nutritional requirement to function optimally. Eating whole foods is the most effective way for our bodies to receive adequate vitamins, minerals and antioxidants. There are a few easy steps everyone can take to lower your risk of cancer:

- Eating Organic: conventional produce is sprayed with toxic poisons that contain glyphosate (which is likely carcinogenic) to preserve the crop from insects. A lifetime of eating conventionally farmed food adds up to an abundant amount of poison. On a cellular level, pesticides can cause permanent damage and cellular dysfunction (cancer is a form of cellular dysfunction).
- GMOs: avoid genetically modified foods, not only because they are conventionally grown, but GMO food has only been around a short time and the detrimental effects to humans and animals has not yet been established. Why risk your health and support unsustainable farming practices?
- Processed Foods: this category of foods includes any foods that are manufactured and packaged in boxes, cans, or plastic. Processed foods contain ingredients designed to give the food an extended shelf life. Unfortunately, these same chemicals/preservatives are also toxic to the body and alters cellular function, causing dysfunction. Common food additives are: nitrates, nitrites, monosodium glutamate (MSG), aspartame, food dyes, sodium sulfite, sulfur dioxide, potassium bromate, butylated hydroxyanisole (BHA), butylated hydroxytoluene (BHT), propyl gallate and propylene glycol.
- Food Preparation: eating at least one-third of your food raw. Instead of frying or charbroiling try poaching, boiling, steaming or baking your foods. Add whole foods, herbs and spices to your diet to boost your body’s natural ability to fight cancer. Eating 10-12 servings of fresh vegetables per day for maximum benefits.
- Avoid Carbohydrates and Sugar: reduce or eliminate processed foods, sugar and grain-based foods from your diet. Even whole, unprocessed, organic grains can rapidly break down and spike a release in insulin. High amounts of insulin has been linked to promoting cancer growth. Decreasing sugar also includes fruit. Limit of 2-3 servings of fruit per day.

Making changes in your everyday life is never easy. Remember to take things one day at a time, one meal at a time and one choice at a time. Ask your local grocery store to bring more foods in that are made with whole, organic ingredients. Shopping for food is much simpler when there are *choices* available. Stay tuned for future health articles containing simple steps to a healthier, happier YOU.