

DIET & CANCER: MAINTAINING ALKALINITY

Rebecca L. Montrone, B.S., Wondrous Roots, Inc.

A couple of weeks ago I wrote about how nutritional strategies to help prevent cancer can differ – sometimes significantly – from those that are used to help eradicate a cancer that already exists. This week I would like to begin sharing information on the prevention of cancer. This will be the subject of this column for the next few weeks, and then we'll move on to some strategies for the person who presently has some form of cancer. I believe you will be amazed by the simplicity of some – if not all – of these recommendations.

First, it is important to start by emphasizing that cancer occurs when the immune system is functioning suboptimally. I am sure you've heard it said time and again that all of us produce cancerous cells on a regular basis, but that healthy immune systems seek out and destroy them. The popular health and medical media does a masterful job of keeping most of us booking our next appointments out of a fear that something insidious could be going on inside that we simply have no control over. Early detection tests, such as mammograms, PSA levels, and colonoscopies are *not* cancer preventive. They are early detection and, therefore – one would hope – *death* preventive.

The good news is that it *is* possible to practice true cancer prevention. Following is the first of several “root” foundations for promoting vibrant health and preventing – not only cancer – but other degenerative diseases, as well.

SO WHAT'S YOUR NUMBER?

Our blood is always of an alkaline pH. Our tissues, however, are influenced heavily by diet, and as we age, we tend to become more acidic. Cancer thrives in an acidic environment but does not in one that is alkaline. When pH is acidic the body cannot detoxify properly and disease ensues. When pH is acidic the electrical current is disrupted, and pain results. That's the science behind magnets and pain, you know; wearing magnets, sleeping in a bed with a magnetic sheet under the mattress, or sitting on a chair with a magnet under the cushion have an alkalizing effect on the system, and this is how pain is improved!

Interestingly, it is not “bad” food that contributes to acidity but rather the balance of acidifying foods versus alkalizing foods. The foods that have an acidic influence are very healthful foods in general. More important is the balance between the two: ideal for most people is a diet comprised of 75% alkalizing foods and 25% acidifying. The acid foods are our richer foods and, to include fats and oils; nuts and nut butters from cashews, Brazil nuts, peanuts, pecans, and even Tahini (ground sesame seeds) ; animal protein from beef, pork, turkey, venison, shellfish, tuna, salmon; cheese, milk, and butter; many beans and legumes; and miscellaneous items such as rice and almond milk, distilled vinegar, wheat germ, potatoes, coffee, black tea, and semolina pasta. Almost all grains are acidifying, and chemicals, drugs, pesticides and herbicides make the list, as well.

The list of alkalizing foods is chock full of vegetables and fruits – all berries except the cranberry; unpasteurized organic milk; protein sources such as eggs, whey, cottage cheese, chicken breast, yogurt, almonds, chestnuts, fermented soy foods, flax seeds, pumpkin seeds, squash seeds, sunflower seeds, sprouted seeds, and millet. Green and white teas, herbal teas, Banchi tea, and Kombucha are alkalizing beverages. The oriental vegetables rank high here, the sweetener stevia, and spices such as cinnamon, curry, ginger, mustard, chili pepper, sea salt, miso, tamari, and all herbs.

The balance of this diet is the same as the one I recommend for good health in general and weight loss and maintenance. Acidic foods do not have to be avoided, and – in my opinion – most shouldn't be, but they must be properly balanced. I favor a diet comprised of 40% complex carbohydrates primarily from vegetables and some fruit, 30% high-quality fat, and 30% high-quality protein. Choosing liberally from the protein and fats from the alkalizing list of foods is a good way to fill that ratio while tipping the scales in favor of alkalinity.

WHAT ELSE CAN I DO?

Fortunately, there are some other very simple things you can do to bring your pH into the range it should be, which is somewhere between 7.0 and 7.5. You can easily measure your own pH using test strips to test your urine or saliva at intervals throughout the day. Find out where you stand, then make the necessary dietary changes and think about trying some – or all – of the following suggestions.

Use **alkalizing drops** in your drinking water. There are several different brands – all involve squeezing eight or so drops into each glass of drinking water. Drink one of those “**green drinks**” on a daily basis. It's hard to eat the best diet everyday, but it is easy to mix some powder into a glass of water and drink it before your day begins. In addition to increasing alkalinity, you'll be nourishing yourself with billions of phytonutrients you most likely would not otherwise obtain from your diet.

Use supplemental minerals, especially **magnesium**. None of us are getting enough magnesium in our diets. Magnesium is crucial to health, and it is alkalizing, as is calcium. A few years ago we all heard lots about coral calcium, which is a form of calcium that also contains magnesium and trace minerals; the gist of what all the excitement was about was, you guessed it... attaining and maintaining an alkaline pH. As mentioned above, wearing **magnets** in your shoes, using magnets for your bed or chair, etc., is another way to increase pH to healthful levels. **Rebound** on a mini-trampoline. No, I'm completely serious. This activity does increase alkalinity, but as it spills over into another entire “root” of cancer-prevention/cancer-elimination, so I think I'll just keep you hanging till next time. Don't let it stop you from bouncing in the meantime, however, if you should find yourself so inclined!