



## A Healthy Diet Will Slow and/or Stop Most Cancers. Why Not?

More than 30 years ago, I (John McDougall, MD) performed and published the first study on the dietary treatment of breast cancer. Although it was a small study circulated by an obscure journal, this was an important beginning for the current medical thinking that a healthy diet should be fundamental therapy recommended by physicians for all cancer patients.

Research at that time (before the 1980s) had shown that overweight women with high levels of cholesterol, estrogen, and prolactin in their blood died sooner from their breast cancer than women with lower values. This study demonstrated that the McDougall Diet improves all of these prognostic factors without costs or side effects. The ultimate benefits are predicted to be a reduced risk for recurrence of the cancer and a longer life. "Cure" is the proper word to use for patients who live out their normal life expectancy: See the story of one of my study's original participants, Ruth Heidrich, below.

[The McDougall Diet](#) is based on common starches, like beans, corn, potatoes, sweet potatoes, and rice with some green and yellow vegetables and fruits. No vegetable oils. No supplements.

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**Plant-food based diet reduces prognostic factors for poor survival:**

- Obesity
- Cholesterol
- Estrogen
- Prolactin

[Read More>>>](#) *Breast 1984;10:18-21.*

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On February 13, 2015, [the American Cancer Society published their recommendations](#) that cancer survivors should follow "prudent diets," plant-based diets that are high in fruits, vegetables and unrefined grains while at the same time being low in red and processed meats, refined grains, and sugars. Its report states, "These diets are contrasted to 'Western' diets,' which have the opposite pattern and are heavy in meats, sweets, other processed foods, and

dietary fat." They also recommend weight loss and exercise in order to prolong survival for people with cancer.

This turn in thinking about the importance of food is especially important because [the latest statistics \(2015\)](#) from the American Cancer Society show little improvement in survival rates over the past 40 years for cancer patients; regardless of the good intentions of their practitioners, aggressively attacking their tumors with surgery, radiation, and/or chemotherapy. (Improvements from standard medical treatments have been limited mostly to childhood, blood, and lymphoid cancers, representing fewer than 10% of all cancers.)

### Improved Survival From a Healthy Diet

A low-fat, plant-based diet\* has been shown to [positively affect](#) survival in cancers of the:

[Breast](#)

[Colon](#)

[Prostate](#)

Skin: [Melanoma](#)

\*This research has been based on diets that are still too high in fat (30% or higher), loaded with animal foods, and deficient in plant-derived foods (especially starches). [A truly low-fat, starch-based diet](#) like the one once followed in Japan (rice and vegetables with fewer than 10% of the calories as fat) would provide far greater benefits for prevention and survival than the "Mediterranean-type" diets that have been recommended lately. A truly therapeutic diet, like the McDougall Diet, is 7% fat with no meat, poultry, fish, eggs, dairy, or vegetable oils. Meaningful research in the future should use the best treatments available rather than compromise the patients' health with "prudent diets."

This enlightened dietary approach focuses on strengthening the human body and its magnificent abilities to heal and stay healthy; while, at the same time, removing cancer-causing and -promoting elements from the patients' diets. Even diseases, which seem as far removed from food as [pre-cancerous actinic keratosis](#) of the skin and [lung \(smoking\) cancer](#) are benefited with a healthy low-fat diet. [The McDougall Diet](#) supports phenomenal recoveries in many ways.

## Ten Diet-Induced Changes That Slow and Reverse Cancer

1. Losing weight: [Obesity](#) increases not only the risk of getting cancer, but overweight people die sooner from their cancers.\*
2. [Cutting out meat](#): This removes substances known to cause cancer progression.
3. [Stopping cow's milk](#): This removes substances known to cause cancer progression.
4. Reducing intake of [growth stimulants](#): Animal foods of all kinds increase growth factors (IGF-1, etc.) for cancer progression.
5. Giving up [vegetable oils](#): Isolated corn, safflower, olive, etc. oils will encourage tumors to grow faster (than do animal fats).
6. Avoiding consumption of cancer-promoting chemicals ([environmental carcinogens](#) and persistent [organic pollutants](#)).
7. Increasing [immune system](#) enhancing plant components called phytonutrients.
8. Growing healthy [intestinal bacteria](#) to enhance the body's defenses against cancer.
9. Increasing intake of [anti-cancer plant sterols](#).
10. Raising the consumption of cancer-fighting [folates](#). As the root word "foliage" implies, these substances are from plants.

Independent of diet, [physical activity](#) (exercise) has also been shown to significantly improve survival of women with breast cancer. [Sunshine](#) is also vital for health and could cut the risk of dying from breast cancer in half. (I do not recommend [vitamin D supplements](#).)

\* People treated with a low-fat, starch-based diet become healthier, and one sign of this better health is they become trim. Unfortunately, physicians misinterpret the meaning of this weight loss as a sign of sickness because of their past experiences which have taught them that "slim" means the end of life; because their patients lose their appetites and become malnourished with illness and treatments. Patients must not let themselves suffer from their doctors' biases and ignorance. (React when you hear, "You can go on a vegetarian diet, just don't lose weight.")

## Is Hope Ever Lost?

I often see women with breast cancer, men with prostate cancer, and both genders with many other forms of late-stage cancers. Their doctors have given them no hope; in fact, in most cases, well-intentioned medical treatments (surgery, radiation, and chemotherapy) have added to their miseries. Hopelessness compounds the suffering. Patients need to be told that even with advanced cancer, there is sometimes recovery, called "spontaneous re-

gression." The standard definition of spontaneous regression is "the partial or complete disappearance of a malignant tumor in the absence of treatment or in the presence of therapy considered inadequate to exert a significant influence on the disease." Spontaneous regression of cancer is not as rare an occurrence as once thought. In a [study based on mammograms](#), 22% of the invasive breast cancers in women spontaneously regressed (disappeared on their own) over a six-year interval (with no treatment).

People with a body full of disease have also recovered. One recent report identified [32 cases](#) of spontaneous regression of clinical breast cancer. There are certainly many more unreported cases. Advanced melanoma, brain cancer (neuroblastoma), and kidney cancer are also known to [disappear without treatment](#). Precancerous changes in the female uterine cervix and colon polyps also regress naturally.

Simple logic would lead to the conclusion that "such a miracle" is more likely to happen for someone in good health, rather than in poor health. The only way I know to consistently improve health is by replacing destructive habits with supportive ones. The most powerful of these necessary changes is the kind of food (not the quantity).

I have seen what I believe to be spontaneous regressions in my patients. [Ruth Heidrich](#) is one remarkable example of metastatic breast cancer, spread to the bones and lungs, diagnosed over 33 years ago, and she lives cancer-free today. Ruth was with us in January of 2015 on the Hawaii [McDougall Adventure](#) trip.

Never give up! [It's the food](#).



## Jessica Bowen Benefitted



At age 29, on April 11, 2011, Jessica Bowen was diagnosed with aggressive Stage 3 invasive ductal carcinoma of the breast cancer. (Stage 3 means the cancer is large and has spread to multiple lymph nodes, and maybe to the skin and muscles of the chest.) She underwent standard therapies and changed her diet. I heard from Jessica on February 22, 2015. "Hello! I am doing good, thank you for asking! I'd be honored if you use my story any way you see fit! If it can help anyone, that makes me happy. Here is an updated picture. I was a 'survivor model' for Rock the Runway & Runway for a Cause last year...I was able to share my story with other survivors while participating."

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## Featured Recipes

### Simple McDougall Recipes

Many people have written to us asking for very simple and easy to put together McDougall meals. They sometimes don't like to cook, or have the time to put together one of the dishes that requires more effort, or they lack the kitchen space or feel this way of eating will be too costly because of "all the vegetables they need to buy". So here are a few recipes that anyone can put together in a very short amount of time, for very little money, and best of all, they taste great!

## **QUICK OATMEAL FOR ONE**

Preparation Time: 1 minute

Cooking Time: 1 minute

Servings: 1

1 cup water

½ cup quick oats

Place the water in a small saucepan and add the oats. Bring to a boil and let cook for 1 minute. Let it rest in the pan for another minute, then place in a bowl. Top with some fresh or frozen blueberries, if desired (no need for any chopping) and enjoy a hearty breakfast.

## **BAKED POTATOES**

Baked potatoes can be enjoyed as a whole meal or as a quick snack. Bake in the oven or use the microwave if you choose. I always bake my potatoes in the oven, and since I am heating the oven for a potato, I always make more than one, usually 5 or 6 at a time since they keep well in the refrigerator.

Preparation Time: 2 minutes

Baking Time: 1 hour (microwave about 10-12 minutes)

Servings: variable

Russet potatoes (you choose how many)

Preheat the oven to 425 degrees. Prick the potatoes all over with a fork and place directly on the oven rack. Bake for about one hour, depending on their size. Check to see if they are done by pricking with a fork: when it slips in easily, they are ready. Remove from oven, let cool slightly, and enjoy topped with salsa, barbecue sauce, or another fat free topping of your choice.

Refrigerate any extras for later use by placing uncovered in a flat container. Reheat in the oven or microwave until heated through, or slice lengthwise and heat on a non-stick skillet until slightly browned, flipping several times with a spatula.

## **SLOW COOKED BEANS**

This is my favorite way to cook any type of dried beans, and there are so many to choose from, all with different flavors and textures. This is one of the simple meals that John and I enjoy several times a week. I usually serve this over whole grain rice, but sometimes vary that with baked or sliced potatoes.

Preparation Time: 1 minute

Cooking time: 6-8 hours on high

Servings: variable, makes about 10 cups of beans

2 cups dried beans

6 cups water

Place the dried beans and the water in a slow cooker (crock pot). No need to soak the beans overnight first. Turn on high and let cook for 6-8 hours until tender. Season with any type of seasoning mixture that you like, such as a chili seasoning mix, Italian herbal mix, curry powder mixture, etc. There are many healthy choices on all supermarket shelves.

Serve over baked potatoes or some instant brown rice (or thawed, frozen brown rice or other whole grains). For some variety, add a few handfuls of fresh baby spinach to the pot of beans just before serving. Stir in well and let cook for a couple of minutes before spooning over your potatoes or grains. (Again, no chopping required for this meal.) The extra beans will last for several days in the refrigerator, or freeze in smaller containers for a quick meal at a later date.

### **QUICK VEGETABLE TOPPING**

This simple topping for potatoes or grains can easily be varied depending on the type of tomatoes, beans and vegetables that you choose. All this requires is the opening of a few cans and a stovetop to heat it on. No chopping required or long cooking time either.

Preparation Time: 4 minutes

Cooking Time: 7 minutes

Servings: variable, makes about 6 cups

2 14.5 ounce cans chopped stewed tomatoes (Italian, Mexican, etc.)

1 15 ounce can cooked beans (black, white, pinto, garbanzo, etc.)

1 10 ounce bag frozen corn kernels (or green peas, green beans, etc)

Place all the ingredients in a medium saucepan (add a seasoning mixture of your choice if you choose) and cook over medium heat for about 7 minutes until heated through. Stir occasionally. Serve plain or as a topping for baked potatoes or cooked whole grains.

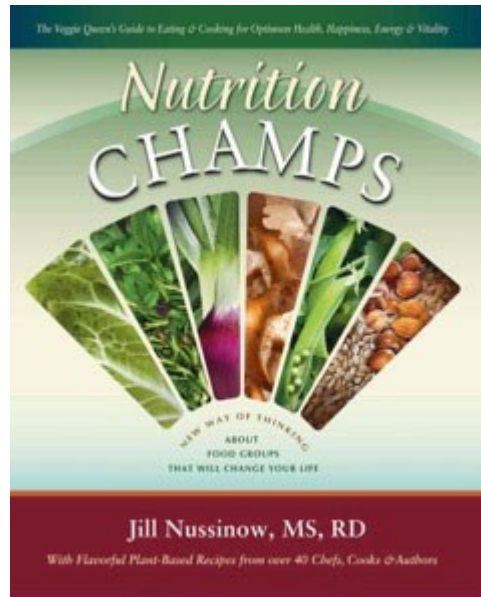
Any of these simple meals can be eaten on its own, or add some variety by steaming some fresh or frozen vegetables. Serve with some hearty whole grain bread, and /or a simple green salad with a delicious oil-free dressing.



Watch for more of these simple meal ideas in upcoming newsletters.

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**Jill Nussinow, MS, RD has a new cookbook and has shared some recipes with us.**



*Nutrition CHAMPS* is a paperback cookbook with 200 recipes, many of which are gluten-free, no oil, low or no sugar and salt. The recipes span 6 groups of food:

Cruciferous Vegetables

Herbs and Spices

Alliums

Mushrooms

Pulses (beans, peas and lentils)

Seeds and Nuts

Jill's recipes are augmented by those from some of your favorite cookbook authors, bloggers and writers including Dreena Burton, Chef AJ, Kathy Hester, Robin Robertson and too many more to list here. With a foreword by Dr. Mary (Clifton) Wendt of Get Waisted.

The breadth of recipes from breakfast to desserts cover all the CHAMPS foods, including raw, cooked and pressure cooked. You will learn more about the health benefits of each food category, with tempting recipes that you can eat daily.

## **FENNEL WITH BROCCOLI, ZUCCHINI AND PEPPERS**

Many of you may be unfamiliar with using fennel, but this dish has so much flavor you will wonder why you have never tried this vegetable before. Most supermarkets carry fennel bulbs in the fresh produce section and many farmers' markets also have it.

Serves 4

2 cups sliced fresh fennel (see the Hints below)  
1 cup broccoli florets  
1 cup sliced zucchini  
1/2 cup coarsely chopped red bell pepper  
2 cups vegetable broth  
Freshly ground black pepper

Place the vegetables and 1 cup of the broth in a large non-stick sauté pan. Grind some fresh black pepper over the vegetables. Cover and steam for 5 minutes, then remove the cover and continue to cook, stirring frequently until most of the broth is absorbed and the vegetables are beginning to stick to the bottom of the pan.

Add another 1/2 cup of the broth and a few more twists of pepper. Continue to cook and stir, uncovered, until broth is again absorbed and vegetables begin to stick again.

Add the remaining broth and more black pepper. Continue to cook until broth is absorbed again. Taste and add more black pepper if desired before serving.

Hints:

Fresh fennel is sometimes sold under the name anise, with several inches of fine leafy fronds attached. Cut the fronds off at the top of the bulb, trim the root end, cut the entire bulb in half lengthwise and then slice thinly. Two medium-sized bulbs should yield about 2 cups sliced. If you have a bit more than 2 cups, just use the extra amount in this recipe.

Slice the zucchini in half lengthwise and then slice thinly. One zucchini should yield about 1 cup.

One half of a red bell pepper should yield about 1/2 cup of 1/2-inch size pieces.

## **CRUNCHY KOHLRABI QUINOA SALAD**

This delicious salad is easy to put together and stays fresh tasting and crunchy while it is chilling in the refrigerator. It can easily be modified using whatever vegetables you have in your garden or have found at the farmers' market.

Preparation Time: 30 minutes

Chilling Time: 1–2 hours

## Serves 6

1 cup uncooked quinoa, well rinsed  
2 cups vegetable broth  
3 2-inch strips of lemon zest  
1 1/2 cups asparagus, sliced into 1/2-inch pieces  
1 cup snow peas, cut in half  
1/2 cup kohlrabi, peeled and sliced into thin strips  
1/3 cup radishes, thinly sliced  
3 tablespoons lemon juice  
2 tablespoons chopped fresh chives  
2 tablespoons chopped fresh parsley  
1 tablespoon chopped fresh cilantro (optional)  
1 teaspoon chopped fresh mint  
Freshly ground pepper  
Dash sea salt

Place quinoa in a pot with the vegetable broth and bring to a boil. Reduce heat, stir in the pieces of lemon zest, cover and cook for 15 minutes. Remove from heat, stir, remove pieces of lemon zest (discard) and let quinoa cool slightly.

Meanwhile, put a large pot of water on to boil, drop in asparagus and snow peas and cook for 2–3 minutes until crisp-tender. Remove from pot with tongs and drop into a bowl of ice water. Drain.

Combine quinoa, asparagus, snow peas, kohlrabi and radishes in a large bowl. Add remaining ingredients and mix well. Season with freshly ground pepper and sea salt, if desired. Chill for 1–2 hours before serving to allow flavors to mingle.

Hints: Wash the lemon and then peel with a vegetable peeler, yielding very thin strips. Use the remaining lemon for the juice in this recipe. Kohlrabi may be unfamiliar to you, but I highly recommend it in this recipe. Look for it in farmers' markets or in large supermarkets or natural food stores. If you can't find it, you may just omit it, or use fresh zucchini or cucumber instead.