

Holistic Self-Care for the Breast Cancer Survivor

Dietary:

The best diet is based on variety and local, organic foods that are in season. Also, it is important to ENJOY your food. Find a farmer's market and have fun trying new things. Avoid too much raw or cold foods and drinks. For damp conditions, you also want to avoid any foods that promote dampness. This includes sugar, dairy (especially uncultured and pasteurized), refined grains, and fried or greasy foods. The foods that are hard for your body to digest can tax your spleen, inhibit proper digestion, and cause dampness as a result. Dampness can then become phlegm.

The following should always be avoided:

- Artificial Sweeteners (these are artificial chemicals)
- Preserved luncheon meats, hot dogs, or sausage
- Margarine and other trans-fats and hydrogenated oils
- High Fructose Corn Syrup
- "Non-fat" foods (as they usually contain one of the above ingredients)
- Charred Meats
- Peanut Butter unless you make it yourself 😊(store bought, even the "natural" variety, has been found to contain carcinogenic molds)
- Alcohol, especially women, as we don't have as much "alcohol dehydrogenase" (an enzyme that helps break down alcohol) as men. Limit to 1-2 glasses a week if you must.
- Tobacco products
- Perfumed Deodorants (avoid all deodorants and antiperspirants if you can)
- Perfumes (try essential oils instead, as they don't contain chemicals)
- Chemical cleaners, pesticides, shampoos, soaps...
- Sodas (especially Diet Soda)

- Fast Food (Go see the movie “Super Size Me” for explanation)
- MSG
- Limit salt consumption

Do include the following:

- Ginger
- Turmeric
- Sea Vegetables (nori, kombu, hijiki,...)
- Fresh fruits and veggies
- Mushrooms (reishi, maitake, shitake)
- Miso soup
- Sauerkraut
- Green Tea
- Garlic (raw)
- Ground flax seeds (sprinkle on food)
- Greens (steamed)

Exercise/ Qi Gong, Yoga

- 4,7,8 Breathing with “Shhhh...” on the exhale, four breaths twice a day
- Shaking
- Transition movement

Dry Skin Brushing: Using a handheld brush with soft natural bristles, do this before your shower each day. Starting at the toes, brush upwards towards the torso, making sure to get the backs of the legs too. Then brush inward from the fingers, up the arms towards the torso. Finally, brush the head and down the back of the neck, continuing down the chest, stomach and back. This process stimulates the lymph system and increases circulation to aid in detoxification. Bath and Body works often has nice brushes to choose from.