

Diet and Cancer

A study conducted by the National Cancer Institute has concluded that as much as 90 percent of all cancer in humans have been attributed to environmental factors, including diet. Dietary modification was shown to have the greatest effect on the incidence of the cancers of the stomach and large bowel and, to a lesser extent, on the cancers of the breast and lungs.

The experts are very much aware that although it may not be possible to specify a diet that will guarantee completely the prevention of cancers' risks due to the fact that there are many other factors involved, however certain diet modifications would generally help. Some of these guidelines are:

1-Reducing the consumption of both saturated and unsaturated fats to 30 percent of total calories. Fat has been linked to a number of cancers especially colon,breast and reproductive system (uterine...) cancers.

2-Increasing the intake of fruits, vegetables, and whole grain cereal products in the daily diet. Foods rich in Vitamin C and beta carotene such as apricots, peaches, cantaloupe, watermelon, strawberries, citrus fruits, and broccoli, spinach,romaine lettuce, parsley, peppers, cabbage, white and sweet potatoes,Brussels sprouts, and carrots are highly recommended.

*Consumption of such vegetables such as cabbage, broccoli, cauliflower, brussel sprouts has been linked to a reduced incidence of gastric and colon and rectal cancer.

3-Decreasing the consumption of food preserved by salt curing in meats, salt pickling, and smoking in addiiton to cutting back on sausages, smoked fish and ham, bacon and hot dogs. . It has been found that in countries such as China, Japan, and Iceland where such foods are consumed, there was a higher incidence of the esophagus and stomach cancers.

4-Alcoholic beverages should be consumed only in moderation. Heavy drinking, especially in combination with smoking, has been associated with an increased risk of the upper gastrointestinal and respiratory tracts cancers, as well as other adverse health effects.

Many people also believe that dietary protein is also linked to cancer.However, some research also indicates that a low cholesterol (especially below 150) may be linked to colon cancer. So, the best advice is to use moderate amount of most foods and consume a balanced diet rather than eating just one kind of food such as red meat for example.