

# Alternatives<sup>®</sup>

## FOR THE HEALTH-CONSCIOUS INDIVIDUAL

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Dr. David G. Williams

## A Treasure Chest of Protection

Last month I described a technique that could help drain the prostate gland and prevent problems such as prostatitis and prostate cancer. Cancer has now surpassed heart disease as the leading cause of death in this country among people under age 85, so learning about and (more importantly) using these techniques becomes increasingly helpful. And breast cancer is the second leading cause of cancer death in women after lung cancer, so it's important to know that you can take steps to effectively prevent that disease as well.

Factors involved in breast cancer include dietary concerns, exposure to environmental toxins and estrogens, and lymphatic drainage and circulation in the breast. I strongly believe that most cases of breast cancer can be prevented when these areas are addressed properly.

Like most cancers, the problem often starts when a normal cell becomes defective and begins to grow and reproduce uncontrollably. This can be caused by a genetic defect, or a mutation of the cell from free-radical damage. The gist of the matter is that antioxidants can stop or help repair the damage caused by free radicals. And the key is supplying our body with a range of antioxidants.

### Soldiers Marching Seven Abreast

Breast cancer patients have particularly low levels of the antioxidants selenium, glutathione, vitamin C, vitamin E and its various cofactors, bioflavonoids, carotenoids, and coenzyme Q10. Selenium works with glutathione to help protect fatty tissues in the body, such as the breasts, from free radical damage. Animal research has shown for years that low levels of selenium are directly related to the development

of various cancers of the breast, liver, and prostate. The latest research shows this relationship appears to be the case in humans as well. (*Cancer Res* 03:63(12):3347-51)

Most people in this country have inadequate selenium levels (due to poor soil and poorer diet), but this problem is easily corrected. One of the richest food sources of selenium is Brazil nuts (one ounce contains over 800 mcg of selenium). You should be getting at least 400 mcg of selenium daily, 200 mcg of it from your daily multi-vitamin/mineral supplement.

Glutathione is not only one of the most important antioxidants, it is also a significant detoxification compound. Low levels of glutathione are a direct indicator of poor overall health.

Glutathione also helps protect and regulate a tumor suppression protein called p53 that is known to be involved in over half of all cancers. Under normal circumstances, p53 works by slowing down cell division whenever cellular DNA material is damaged—which gives the body more time to repair the damage before the cell division gets out of control and develops into cancer. The p53 protein also has the ability to completely stop the cell division in cancer cells, effectively destroying them.



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*You will observe with concern how long a useful truth may be known and exist, before it is generally received and practiced on.—Benjamin Franklin*

The ability of the p53 protein to perform these life-saving feats—particularly in cancer where cells are rapidly dividing and spewing out large quantities of toxic waste and byproducts—depends on an adequate supply of glutathione. (*Int J Cancer* 05;113(1):29–35) (*Methods Mol Biol* 03;234:121–33) (*Biomarkers* 03;8(6):522–8) (*Antioxid Redox Signal* 02;4(3):405–14)

You can raise your level most economically by taking the supplement N-acetylcysteine (NAC) and/or regularly using a good protein powder. Improving glutathione levels is one of the primary reasons I recommend and drink a protein-based shake each morning. (*Editor's note: See Alternatives, Vol 6, No. 11 for more about the benefits of glutathione.*)

Antioxidants tend to help re-activate each other. For example, when vitamin E stops a free radical reaction, it becomes “de-activated.” When there are adequate levels of vitamin C available, however, vitamin E can be “re-activated”—which enables it to quench more free radicals.

Coenzyme Q10 is another very important compound for the prevention of breast cancer. Women who develop the disease are routinely deficient in CoQ10. Not only is it a powerful antioxidant, but it appears to help destroy cancer cells by increasing metabolism and free radical damage inside the cancer cells themselves. Daily dosages in the neighborhood of 300 to 400 mg of CoQ10 have resulted in either a partial or complete regression of breast cancer tumors. (*Biochem Biophys Res Commun* 97;234(2):296–9) (*Int J Clin Pharmacol Ther* 98;36(9):506–9) (*Clin Biochem* 00;33(4):279–84) (*Biochem Biophys Res Commun* 95:212(1):172–7) (*Biochem Biophys Res Commun* 94;199(3):1504–8) (*Mol Aspects Med* 94:15 Suppl:s231–40)

Some of the most commonly prescribed medications (beta-blockers for high blood pressure

treatment and the statin drugs used to lower cholesterol) also deplete CoQ10 levels. The long-term use of these drugs can lead not only to additional heart problems, but also to cancers.

A varied mix of two types of compounds called bioflavonoids and carotenoids is also essential in preventing and/or treating breast cancer. Both of these families of compounds are found in varying degrees in fruits and vegetables. Bioflavonoids provide the green-blue-purple colors in food, and carotenoids give us yellow, orange, and red—so a variety of colors of food will give you a wide variety of beneficial compounds. Since research has shown that some of the bioflavonoids such as quercetin, rutin, and hesperidin have the ability to both inhibit cancer and prevent the spread of the disease, you should be sure that there are adequate amounts of these compounds (100 mg or more) in your daily multi-nutrient. The same holds true for many of the carotenoids that also work best in combination and which you can get by eating an assortment of fruits and vegetables.

Like many food compounds, bioflavonoids have never seemed to be of much interest to mainstream medicine. A few years ago there was some very interesting research that should have made front-page news in every paper across the country. Not only did it not make the news, most doctors in the cancer and prevention fields still know nothing about it.

Researchers in laboratory studies at Tufts University School of Medicine, in Boston, found that a combination of curcumin and bioflavonoids was able to inhibit the growth of estrogen-dependent human breast cancer cells by up to 95 percent. Curcumin, you might recall, is one of the compounds found in the spice turmeric. (*Environ Health Perspect* 98;106(12):807–12)

*Continued on page 164*



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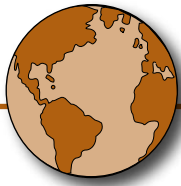
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**Author: Dr. David Williams; Publisher: Robert Kroening; Editor: Bill Todd**

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## NEWS TO USE FROM AROUND THE WORLD

### One Processed Food with Value

**ALBANY, CALIFORNIA**—Although I'm not a big fan of ketchup, my son, Mason, is quite the connoisseur. The good news surrounding ketchup has been the discovery of its cancer-fighting component, lycopene. Studies have shown that lycopene consumption can reduce the risk of prostate, breast, pancreatic, and intestinal cancers—and possibly even heart attacks.

The latest news comes from our Department of Agriculture. They recently tested lycopene levels in six popular brands of ketchup, three organic brands, two store brands, and two fast-food chain varieties.

They found that the new purple and green ketchup had the same lycopene content as the plain red ones. The non-organic brands averaged about 100 micrograms of lycopene per gram of ketchup, and the fast-food samples contained about 60 micrograms. The organic ketchups were found to have the highest lycopene content, with one containing 183 micrograms per gram. (*J Agric Food Chem* 04;52(26):8017–20)

The researchers in the study also made the useful observation that, as a rule of thumb, if you want the highest lycopene content in ketchup, you should pick the brands with the darkest color.

### High-Tech Birth Control

**STONY BROOK, NEW YORK**—Since I spend a great deal of time writing and researching on my laptop, this recent information from researchers at the State University of New York quickly piqued my interest.

For years we've been seeing a drop in male fertility rates, and have attributed it to everything from environmental and pesticide exposure to food packaging and preservatives. It is well known that increased scrotal temperature is a risk factor in male infertility. You probably recall reading in the past that "tighty whities," or tight, close-fitting underwear, tends to hold the testicles closer to the body and increase scrotal temperature, which then results in decreases in sperm production. Normally, the body regulates the temperature in the scrotum naturally by drawing it closer to the body during colder temperatures, and distancing it from the body during hotter temperatures. Tight-fitting underwear prevents this temperature control.

Researchers have now found that the use of laptop computers can also cause increased scrotal temperatures and reduced fertility.

Two factors are at work. First, the sitting position required to hold a laptop computer necessitates that one's thighs are held closely together. Second, additional heat is generated from the computer itself. Scrotal tem-

peratures were found to rise 2.1 degrees C simply from prolonged closing of the thighs, and as much as 2.8 degrees C when working with a laptop computer.

These increases are more than enough to have a significant negative effect on the production of sperm, particularly in teen-age boys and young men. Previous studies have found that increases in scrotal or testicular temperatures of anywhere from 1 to 2.9 degrees C will have a negative effect on spermatogenesis and fertility. (*Hum Reprod* 05;20(2):452–5)

My computer gets so hot that I frequently rest it on a large hardcover book while in my lap, which at least takes care of the heat from the machine. It doesn't, however, address the problem of sitting for extended periods of time with the thighs closed.

The above study found that temperatures started to rise significantly after only 15 minutes in this position. I don't think it would be too much of a stretch to say that prolonged sitting at work (or in front of the television, for that matter) might be a factor in our decrease in overall fertility.

### Olive You Forever

**CHICAGO, ILLINOIS**—As I mentioned in the first article this month, cancer has surpassed heart disease as the leading killer of Americans under the age of 85. Not only have cancer rates increased, but there has been a slight drop in heart disease deaths—which has been attributed to a drop in the incidence of smoking and more advanced methods of treating heart disease. (I suspect an increase in vitamin C consumption, as well as an overall awareness in dietary changes—including more dietary supplements, fish, beneficial oils, etc.—would also be contributing factors.)

Lung cancer continues to be the leading cause of cancer death among both males and females, with prostate cancer being the second leading cause in men and breast cancer the second leading cause in women.

On a related note, researchers at the Feinberg School of Medicine in Chicago have found that oleic acid, the major fatty acid component in olive oil, blocks the production of a specific protein that stimulates the growth of breast cancer cells. This particular protein is thought to be involved in about one-fifth of all breast cancers.

Instead of just looking at the consumption of olive oil, Javier Menendez and his colleagues at Feinberg studied the effects of olive oil's different components. This study explains why earlier researchers often reported mixed results. It now appears that it's the oleic acid in olive oil that provides much of the protection. (*Ann Oncol* 05, Jan 10 Epub)



## The Renegade Within

We know that the growth of breast cancer cells can be stimulated by estrogen. The more lifetime exposure a woman has to estrogen, the greater her risk of developing breast cancer. What's more, exposure to estrogen-like compounds in our food, air, and water supplies has dramatically changed the age when young girls are reaching puberty.

The estrogen-like compounds in environmental chemicals and pesticides will stimulate cancer growth just like estrogen itself. Due to the increased exposure to estrogen and estrogen-like chemicals, we can expect to see an even greater increase in breast cancer in the upcoming generations. It's important to avoid these estrogen-like compounds when possible, by showing great restraint in the use of pesticides and household chemicals.

We shouldn't be cooking or heating any foods in plastic, or storing acidic foods in plastic containers. Our drinking water should be pure and uncontaminated. It would be best to eat organic fruits and vegetables, or, even better, raise your own, if possible. Meat and milk products should be hormone-free, so buy only "free range" organic animal products. The same growth hormones given to animals will very often show up in the products you buy in the grocery store.

We also know that curcumin helps stop the spread of cancer by inhibiting angiogenesis, or new blood vessel formation. Tens of thousands of lives could be saved each year simply by adding a little turmeric and bioflavonoids to the diet of women in this country. Turmeric is one powerful anti-inflammatory, anti-cancer, immune-boosting compound that should be included in everyone's diet, so make sure you get at least 100 mg daily in food or from your multivitamin.

If you want to increase the anti-cancer powers of curcumin and bioflavonoids even more, research shows you can do so with the addition of the compound genistein (from soybeans). Curcumin and genistein, at even small doses, will stop the growth of estrogen-positive human breast cancer cells. (*Biochem Biophys Res Commun* 97;233(3):692-6)

Many people are consuming various soy products for the supposed health benefits, but most of what is sold in this country is worthless. Many of the soy drinks, powders, and formulas contain little if any genistein or other beneficial phytoestrogens

such as daidzein or equol. Instead, I would recommend using fermented soy products: miso, tempeh, and especially tofu.

## Double-Crossing the Bad Guys

Another specific group of foods that should be a part of everyone's diet is the cruciferous vegetables (broccoli, cabbage, bok choy, Brussels sprouts, cauliflower, cress, kale, mustard, radish, horseradish, turnip, rutabaga, and kohlrabi). I've been writing about them since I began *Alternatives* nearly 20 years ago, and I can't over-emphasize their enormous benefits.

These vegetables contain powerful sulfur compounds, including indole-3-carbinol (I-3-C). Studies have shown that in an acid environment, such as your stomach, I-3-C is converted to another indole called diindolylmethane (DIM) that modifies the metabolism of estrogen and can prevent and/or help treat estrogen-related cancers such as those of the breast or cervix. DIM is sold over the counter as a food supplement, and the therapeutic dosage is normally 360 to 540 mg a day. It is available under the name BioResponse at 877-312-5777, or from N.E.E.D.S. under the name Indoplex at 800-634-1380.

Although many people tend to shun cruciferous vegetables, there's no doubt they are some of the least expensive and most powerful tools you can use to protect your health. *If you learn nothing else from this issue, keep in mind that research has shown that simply eating cabbage once a week can dramatically lower your risk of developing cancer of the esophagus, lung, bladder, colon, and rectum. (Am J Epidemiol 79;190(1):1-20) (Cancer Res Suppl 83:43:2488s-2453s)*

(If you've been a reader of *Alternatives* for any length of time, you know my fondness for cruciferous vegetables—particularly cabbage. I love it fermented. I have a crock of home-made sauerkraut sitting above my kitchen sink right now. It's one of the quickest ways I know to establish and nourish the intestinal flora of the lower bowel, also known as the body's second immune system. A half-cup a day of fermented cabbage (and its natural juice) is one of the world's most powerful immune boosters.)

## Living On the Fat of the Land

In the prevention of breast cancer, it's also imperative that there be a better balance of fatty



## MAILBOX

### Kidney Stones Be Gone

**Question:** I have a long-standing problem with kidney stones. I don't know if it's hereditary or not, but my father had the same problem. I've followed most of your suggestions from past articles, and they definitely seem to help, but the stones always return for some reason. Anything more you could suggest would be greatly appreciated.

Clay J.

East Bloomfield, New York

**Answer:** There's an herbal remedy from South America that has recently become available in this country. It not only helps dissolve existing kidney stones, but can prevent the formation of new ones.

The herb is called Chanca Piedra in Peru, and Quebra Pedra in Brazil (*Phyllanthus niruri*). These names roughly translate as "stone breaker."

In the various parts of South America where the herb has a long history of traditional medical use, it is common for eliminating kidney stones, gallstones, and other digestive problems; liver ailments; flu; malaria; and even diabetes. More recent research has found that the herb also exhibits anti-viral properties against such conditions as hepatitis B and possibly even HIV. (*Hum Exp Toxicol* 03;22(12):639-45) (*Antiviral Res* 04;64(2):93-102) (*Indian J Med Sci* 03;57(9):387-93)

At the federal university in São Paulo, Brazil, several recent studies tested the effects of *P. niruri* on the formation of kidney stones and found that it appears to interfere with the early stages of stone formation and could be an effective way to treat them or prevent their occurrence. (*Urol Res* 03;30(6):374-9) (*BJU Int* 02;89(9):829-34) (*Nephron* 99;81(4):393-7)

The active components in the herb are water-soluble, so the best way to take it seems to be through a tea, an encapsulated powder, or an aqueous (as opposed to an alcohol) extract. A few companies sell the herb, and it might be a bargain considering its ability to prevent or eliminate kidney stones. You have several options, depending on how you prefer to take the herb. Personally, I would prefer the capsules.

Capsules made by Jarrow Formulations (Product number JR-064) can be purchased from a company called Muscle Master. They sell ninety 500-mg capsules for \$13.97 plus shipping and handling; they can be contacted at 800-800-9688 or on the Web at [www.musclemaster.com](http://www.musclemaster.com). The recommended dosage for capsules to eliminate existing stones is generally 500 mg three times daily. (One capsule of the herb can also be emptied into a cup of warm water and taken as a tea, if preferred.)

A jar of the dried raw herb (leaves and stems) can be purchased to make a tea. One jar (125 grams) makes about 125 cups of tea and costs about \$15 from CFS Nutrition, at 888-801-2376 or from their Web site at [www.cfsn.com](http://www.cfsn.com). The recommended dosage for eliminating existing stones is 3 to 4 cups of tea a day. To prevent stone formation, the recommendation is to drink 1 to 3 cups of tea per week.

An aqueous (water) extract of the herb from Raintree Nutrition is also available from iherb for \$18. They can be reached at 888-792-0028, or on the Web at [www.iherb.com](http://www.iherb.com). They are located at 1435 S. Shamrock Ave., Monrovia, California 91016. The recommended dosage is 60 drops (2 mL) taken 2 or 3 times daily. Each mL of the liquid (30 drops) is equivalent to approximately one 500 milligram capsule. The bottle contains 2 ounces.

I have only had limited experience with this herb, but many of the people I've spoken with have been thrilled with its effects. One doctor in Germany reported a 94 percent success rate in eliminating existing stones within 7 to 14 days. Keep in mind, however, it may not be for everyone.

**Chanca piedra shouldn't be used if you're pregnant.** It can be abortive, and has actually been used as a form of birth control in some areas of South America. It may also act as a diuretic or enhance the effects of diuretic drugs commonly used in the treatment of high blood pressure. It may also lower blood sugar levels, especially if used long term. If you're diabetic, it may increase the effectiveness of any diabetes medications, so definitely check with your doctor before using the herb.

Normally, most people I've spoken with don't feel any different or experience any side effects while using the herb. It may slightly increase urinary output, so you definitely want to increase your water intake (but you should be doing this anyway if you have a tendency to develop kidney stones). At the recommended dosages, it normally takes anywhere from 1 to 3 weeks to dissolve any existing stones.

acids in the diet. There have been numerous studies showing there is a relationship between the amount of fat in the diet and the development of breast cancer. A closer look at the research shows that generally there's an over-consumption of omega-6 fatty acids (from vegetable oils), and an under-consumption of omega-3 fatty acids. The proper balance of omega-6 to omega-3 fatty acids

should be about 4 to 1. With what is being consumed in today's diet (less fish; more vegetable oils, fried foods, corn-fed chicken, beef, and hogs; increased margarine consumption) the current ratio appears to be 20 or 25 to 1.

An imbalance of omega-6s to omega-3s has been shown to lead to inflammatory conditions and an increase in the risk of developing breast tumors.

Restoring the balance by increasing omega-3 consumption from foods such as fish, flaxseed and oil, wheat germ, nuts, and pumpkin seeds results in a decreased risk of cancer. Studies have found that giving flaxseed to animals can reduce the size of their breast tumors by as much as 67 percent.

I have found that sardines are one of the best ways to help supplement your diet with additional omega-3 oils. They are also a rich source of the nucleotides RNA and DNA, which help boost the immune system and provide the raw material the body needs to repair itself—crucial if you want to prevent any form of cancer.

The imbalance between omega-6s and omega-3s is also one of the primary reasons I have strongly recommended the increased consumption of nuts and flaxseed. But getting people to eat more nuts and flaxseed has always been difficult, since most people think these foods make them gain weight.

However, research has shown that the beneficial fats in these foods actually compensate for their increased caloric content by increasing your metabolic rate. In simple terms, nuts and flax help turn up your body's thermostat and convert you from a fat-storing warehouse to a fat-burning machine.

It's important to keep in mind that omega-6 fatty acids are not all "bad." The problem comes from the severe imbalance between the omega-6s and the omega-3s that has resulted from an increased diet of processed and refined foods during the past hundred years.

One very beneficial omega-6 is called conjugated linoleic acid (CLA), which is normally found in meat and dairy products from animals that are range-fed on grass. For example, both the meat and milk of range-fed cows are rich sources of CLA, but these products from cows that eat prepared feeds have lower levels of CLA.

Getting high amounts of CLA is important because it is an omega-6 fatty acid that naturally increases the metabolic rate of fat in your body (particularly abdominal fat), and increases lean muscle mass. (*Am J Physiol* 98;275 (3Pt2):R667–72) (*Am J Physiol* 99;276(4Pt2):R1172–9)

In addition to helping you lose body fat and increase muscle, CLA has been shown to be a potent factor in preventing the growth of breast cancer and in inhibiting tumor growth and metastasis in existing cancers.

Studies have shown that breast cancer patients routinely exhibit lower blood levels of CLA than individuals without the disease.

Generally, 3 grams a day is the dose necessary to help one reduce body fat, improve immune system function, and protect against cancers, heart disease, and diabetes.

## Sweetening All the Way to the Grave

For optimal health, and the prevention of breast cancer, there has to be a balance of all food macronutrients: fats, carbohydrates, and proteins. While there has been a recent surge of interest in carbohydrates (sugars), most people don't realize the strong connection between refined sugars and cancer.

Refined sugars are rapidly broken down and almost immediately absorbed into the bloodstream. This rapid spike in blood sugar causes the pancreas to release insulin, a very powerful hormone with other functions besides transporting sugar. Insulin has been called a gene expression modifier, which means it (like many other hormones, environmental toxins, electromagnetic radiation, drugs, etc.) will often determine if a certain genetic factor is turned "on" or "off."

Even if you may have a genetic tendency to develop cancer in the breast or elsewhere, you may never develop the disease if your internal and external environment are such that the gene isn't allowed to express itself. Good nutrition, lifestyle, and the avoiding of chemical toxins and environmental assaults can keep you from genetic mutations or problems. Insulin can play a big factor.

Increased levels of insulin lead to an increase in activity of the insulin-like growth factor (IGF-1), which has been shown to stimulate the growth of breast cancer cells. IGF-1 is thought by many to be one of the most important factors in the development and spread of breast cancer. (*Endocr Relat Cancer* 04;11(4):793–814) (*Breast Dis* 03;17:41–7) (*Novartis Found Symp* 04;262:205–12)

Increased insulin levels also trigger the disruption of various hormone-balancing functions of the liver that, in turn, can stimulate breast cancer growth. Insulin increases inflammatory responses and impairs the energy-producing ability of the cells' mitochondria, resulting in a more acidic and less-oxygenated cellular environment that is conducive to increased cancer growth. Plain and

simple, a diet high in simple carbohydrates (sugars) increases your insulin level, which creates a much more favorable environment for the development and growth of cancer cells. Just as with the omega-6 and omega-3 fatty acids, there must be a balance between the amounts and types of carbohydrates in your diet.

## Young Women in the 60s Had the Idea

Most of what I discussed thus far with regard to breast cancer has been about diet and nutrition. And while I've only talked in general terms about factors like pollution and pesticides, your immediate environment/lifestyle can also play a big role in preventing breast cancer.

For example, last month, I discussed the importance of lymphatic drainage and improving the circulation to the prostate gland. The same holds true for breast tissue. The breast is made up largely of fat cells, which store and concentrate many of the pesticides, chemicals, toxins, and hormones to which we're exposed throughout life.

There are several things we can do to increase the efficiency of the detoxification process, reduce the exposure to estrogen and estrogen-like compounds, and lower the risk of breast cancer. It would take much more than just one issue to discuss them in detail.

Briefly, though, exercising will help break down excess fat molecules and lower estrogen levels. Eating plenty of vegetables helps "scrub" the intestines and makes them more efficient at toxin removal. Increased fiber in the diet will also increase the removal of excess estrogen from the body. Finally, the herb cilantro has been shown to work wonders at removing heavy metal toxins.

It's imperative that you don't overload your liver with the additional burden of detoxifying unnecessary drugs, alcohol, preservatives, or food additives. Keep in mind, too, that being overweight actually causes the adrenal glands to produce more estrogen.

Even if you follow all these steps, the circulation to and from the breast tissue must be unimpeded for toxins to be released. And circulation can be impaired dramatically by wearing a bra.

Specifically, wearing a bra 14 or more hours a day tends to increase prolactin, a hormone that

reduces circulation to the breast. Bras also interfere with the lymphatic drainage of the breast, and their overuse can increase the risk of cancer.

All women should get into a regular habit of removing their bras at least during sleep. I would also suggest using a very gentle and light massaging technique each night before bedtime. The following technique will enhance lymphatic drainage from the breast and go a long way in helping to prevent breast cancer:

- After removing the bra, lie on your bed on your back. Straighten one arm and raise that arm over your head, allowing it to rest on the bed. (For our purposes here, let's presume you raised your right arm first.)
- Next, using the fingers of your left hand, gently stimulate the right nipple by rubbing and/or squeezing it to trigger the release of the hormone oxytocin and increase lymph drainage throughout the breast.
- After stimulating the nipple for a few minutes, very gently grasp the lower portion of the breast. Using a sort of pumping action, gently squeeze and release the breast, gradually moving your hand up toward the outer portion of the breast and armpit area. Continue to "pump" higher into the armpit until you can't go any further.

The idea here is not to rub the skin, but to pump the lymph from the breast into the armpit and then further up the lymph system as you grasp small sections of the breast and armpit and gently squeeze or pump the lymph out of that area.

Continue this pumping procedure for about three minutes, and then switch to the other breast. (Remember to raise the opposite arm over your head.) One three-minute session on each side nightly is all it takes.

While the threat from wearing a bra might not sound too frightening, when you take a closer look at the research data, the figures are scary indeed.

In *Dressed To Kill: The Link Between Breast Cancer and Bras*, the authors reported that: women wearing a bra 24 hours a day had a 3 out of 4 chance of developing breast cancer; women wearing their bras more than 12 hours a day, but not to bed, had a 1 out of 7 risk; women wearing bras less than 12 hours a day had a 1 in 152 risk; and women who rarely or never wore bras had a 1 out of 168 risk of developing breast cancer.



In addition to proper circulation, your body has to rid itself of toxic waste material that can inflame tissue and produce free radicals (which can eventually damage DNA and/or genetic material, leading to cancer). The detoxification process involves several steps:

- regular exercise, to release toxins through sweat;
- easing the load on your liver from dealing with alcohol, environmental contaminants, or drugs (prescription, over-the-counter or illegal), so it can break down various excess hormones and toxins; and
- drinking plenty of pure water to help the kidneys flush toxins properly.

You also need to keep your bowels in good working order. Constipation is one of the most prevalent impediments to the detoxification process—especially in women. Left unresolved, it can help create the perfect environment for cancer, not only in the colon and breast, but throughout the body. (*Editor's note: See Alternatives, Vol. 3, Nos. 1 and 2 for more about the problems connected to constipation.*)

## The Dark Hormone of Health

Another environmental factor related to breast cancer is electromagnetic fields (either in the workplace from machinery or around the home from appliances, electric blankets, alarm clocks, etc.) that can suppress the production of melatonin. Working the night shift, getting inadequate sleep, sleeping in a room that isn't completely dark, and taking beta-blocker drugs are all further factors that reduce melatonin production and subsequently increase the risk of breast cancer. (*Med Hypotheses 04;63(4):566–96*) (*J Bio Chem 04;278(37):38294–302*) (*Photochem Photobiol 04;79(4):316–8*) (*Endocr Relat Cancer 03;10(2):153–9*)

While melatonin is undoubtedly best known for its ability to help induce sleep and treat jet lag, it also plays an important role in protecting against DNA damage and in preventing breast cancer. In one study using human breast cancer cells, melatonin (at the same concentration normally secreted in humans) was over 50 percent more effective at inhibiting their growth than the chemotherapy drug 5-fluorouracil. (*Cancer Lett 94;81(1):95–8*)

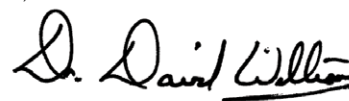
Other studies have repeatedly shown that women who develop breast cancer often produce very little melatonin. Again, this could be due to poor sleeping habits, night work, and/or electromagnetic exposure—which would indirectly make these conditions additional risk factors for developing the disease.

Melatonin supplements are still available over the counter. And while it is considered safe, it's important to remember that it is a hormone and, if used improperly, it can cause unforeseen problems. I prefer establishing proper sleep patterns and avoiding strong electromagnetic fields as the first steps to improving melatonin levels.

If you have an increased risk of developing breast cancer, or suspect a possible melatonin deficiency, your doctor can check your melatonin levels with a simple saliva test. If there is a deficiency, melatonin supplementation should certainly be considered for the prevention and treatment of breast cancer.

As you can tell, breast cancer, as with most other cancers, can have many causative factors. And prevention may, at first, seem to be an overwhelming task. But a closer look will reveal that most of what's required is a return to a cleaner, more wholesome lifestyle—something we should all be doing anyway.

Take Care,



If you have questions or comments for Dr. Williams, please send them to the mail or e-mail addresses listed to the right. Of course, practical and ethical constraints prevent him from answering personal medical questions by mail or e-mail, but he'll answer as many as he can in the Mailbox section of *Alternatives*. For our part, we'll do our best to direct you to his issues, reports, and products related to the subject of your interest.

### Here's how you can reach us:

- For Customer Service matters such as address changes, call **800-527-3044** or write to [custsvc@drdavidwilliams.com](mailto:custsvc@drdavidwilliams.com).
- To order nutritional supplements from Mountain Home Nutritionals (MHN), call 800-888-1415 or visit [drdavidwilliams.com](http://drdavidwilliams.com).
- If you are a licensed health professional and would like to learn how to begin reselling MHN supplements to your patients, please send an e-mail to [practitionerinquiries@davidwilliamsmail.com](mailto:practitionerinquiries@davidwilliamsmail.com).
- To order back issues or reports, call **800-718-8293**.
- To sign a friend up for *Alternatives*, call **800-219-8591**.
- Sign up for free e-mail dispatches at [drdavidwilliams.com](http://drdavidwilliams.com).

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