

Diet and Nutrition

Eating more whole foods and less processed foods can reduce the risk of breast cancer and other chronic diseases.

Science Summary

The more we limit eating processed meat, and foods that are high in saturated fat, salt, and sugar — and increase our communities' access to whole and fresh foods — the more we can address multiple risk factors for breast cancer, including body weight, microbiome, and inflammation.

What can I do for my own body and health?

Following a diet of mostly whole, fresh, unprocessed foods is scientifically supported to help prevent breast cancer, and improve overall health. Vegetables, fruits, dietary fiber, and plant-based proteins can make up a simple and nutritious meal. Try to eat less red and processed meat, highly processed food, and foods containing growth-promoting hormones or pesticides.



What can I do to support the health of my family and friends, and my community?

Eating culturally nutritious foods is easier and more fun with a group. Involve friends and family in planning and cooking meals together and make visiting farmers markets a weekly outing. Spend more time in the produce section of grocery stores. The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) Healthy Incentives Program provides extra funds for healthy foods, helping with grocery budgeting.

Processed food advertising and easy availability make it difficult to choose more nutritious options. Fresh food may be harder to access and more expensive in marginalized communities. For example, despite California producing nearly half of the nation's fruits and vegetables, 1 in 8 Californians lack access to the food they need to lead healthy, active lives.

We can work together to break down these food barriers - through community organizing to increase healthy food options in local stores and by applying for SNAP or your state's equivalent program to make healthy food more affordable.

How can I help advocate for and support systemic change to remove barriers to health?

There is a great need and untapped potential to make healthy food readily available. We can ensure everyone has equitable access to culturally appropriate, nutritious, and affordable food.

Here are some ways we can take systems-level action to reduce breast cancer risk:



Collaborate with community leadership to implement local initiatives that support affordable fresh produce at corner stores, bodegas, and community markets.



Support efforts to share locally grown excess food (for example, food swaps) and ensure farmer's markets are affordable to local communities with limited access to fresh produce.



Provide support for community gardens (for example, education and training, seeds, clean soil, natural pest management, and gardening tools).



Connect with city officials and policymakers to create buffer zones that limit the density of unhealthy fast-food outlets around schools.



Support programs that provide free healthy breakfast and lunch programs without income requirements to K-12 students when school is in session and during summer breaks.



Help to gather and incorporate student input to provide healthy school lunch programs that students are likely to eat.

**TOGETHER, WE CAN
MAKE CHANGE!**



Learn more and get involved.

Breast Cancer Prevention Partners (BCPP) is the leading science-based advocacy organization working to prevent breast cancer by eliminating our exposure to toxic chemicals and other environmental exposures linked to the disease.



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