



American  
Institute for  
Cancer  
Research®

# AICR

the newsletter

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**LOOK INSIDE ▶ FOR YOUR FREE BROCHURES**



From Marilyn Gentry

AICR is proud to be a partner in the World Cancer Research Fund International's Global Cancer Update Program (CUP Global), which provides a global analysis of scientific research into the link between diet, physical activity, weight and cancer.

CUP Global's recent research on colorectal cancer survivorship is highlighted on page 9. The key takeaways? A plant-based diet and physical activity are important for colorectal cancer survivors. And if you need help planning your plant-based diet, use our grocery shopping tips on page 7.

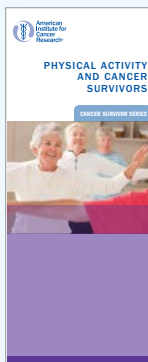
And this month, AICR is delighted to establish the Consuelo C. Ford Breast Cancer Research Fund in memory of Connie Ford. In her trust, Connie named AICR to receive a bequest to fund breast cancer research. As a breast cancer survivor, AICR was important to her. Read more about Connie's extraordinary life on page 6. If you want to consider setting up your own trust, AICR can help. Reach out to 1-800-843-8114.

I hope you enjoy the tips and research-based facts in this Newsletter as you plan your healthy lifestyle.

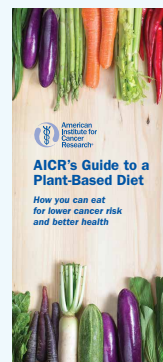


# Free Publications from AICR

**PHYSICAL ACTIVITY AND CANCER SURVIVORS** ▶ This brochure explains the benefits of regular physical activity for cancer survival.



**AICR'S GUIDE TO A PLANT-BASED DIET** ▶ Discover the wide range of whole grains, vegetables, fruits, pulses and other delicious plant foods that AICR recommends eating for lower cancer risk.



**AICR JAR GRIPPER** ▶ You can get a grip on hard-to-open jar lids with this popular health aid.



**SIX STEPS TO A THOUGHTFUL AND PRACTICAL WILL** ▶ With this brochure, you can find out how to create a properly executed will.



**ORDER TODAY!** These free materials help you put AICR's science-based advice to work every day in making healthier choices. Your support makes AICR's life-saving research and education possible, so any gift will be greatly appreciated.

- 1. By phone:** call AICR toll-free at 1-800-843-8114 to order your free brochures.
- 2. By mail:** write to AICR, PO Box 97167, Washington, DC 20090-7167

## AICR EVENTS

AICR and WCRF leaders attended the ACS/CR-UK/NCI Cancer Prevention Conference in Boston, June 25-27, 2024. AICR/WCRF research was heavily featured throughout the conference. The meeting provided an opportunity for AICR/WCRF leaders to meet with key collaborators including AICR grantees, Grant Panel and CUP Global Panel members.



RACHAEL GORMLEY (CEO, WCRF); STEPHEN D. HURSTING, PHD, MPH (AICR DISTINGUISHED PROFESSOR, UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA AT CHAPEL HILL); GIOTA MITROU, PHD (DIRECTOR OF RESEARCH, POLICY AND INNOVATION, WCRF) AND NIGEL BROCKTON, PHD (VICE PRESIDENT OF RESEARCH, AICR)

# Exercise and Diet Help During Breast Cancer Treatment

*A new study provides an optimistic look at how diet and physical activity help combat breast cancer.*



Sometimes small changes can make a big difference. That's the case with a new study that looked at how making lifestyle changes, such as eating well and being active, can improve the outcomes for women with breast cancer, even during chemotherapy.

## About the LEANer Study

The Lifestyle, Exercise and Nutrition Early After Breast Cancer (LEANer) study involved women newly diagnosed with breast cancer (stages I through III) who were receiving chemotherapy.

Half the women in the study were assigned to a nutrition and exercise intervention program. The other half were assigned to usual care, which means they could access lifestyle counseling if requested, but not the full nutrition and exercise intervention program.

Researchers were interested in two different ways that nutrition and physical activity could potentially improve outcomes of chemotherapy.

### 1 Completing full-dose chemotherapy as planned:

Sometimes the dose or number of chemotherapy treatments are reduced due to side effects. When reduced, the treatment may be less effective. Researchers looked at whether nutrition and activity could help reduce side effects and ensure women get their full intended treatment, as planned.

### 2 Pathological complete response to chemotherapy (PCR):

For women who receive pre-surgery chemotherapy, a pathologist checks samples of tissue removed during surgery. If no invasive cancer cells are found, this is called pathological complete response and has been found to predict good long-term outcomes. Researchers tested if nutrition and activity improved response to therapy.

### Women in the nutrition and exercise intervention group received information about:

- Following a plant-based diet, including plenty of vegetables, fruits and fiber
- Cutting back on added sugars and red or processed meats
- Reducing alcohol to no more than one drink per day, if any
- Exercising each week for 150 minutes (moderate) or 75 minutes (vigorous)
- Adding strength-training exercise at least two days each week
- Reducing sedentary time

## What Did the Researchers Find?

Maura Harrigan, MS, RDN, CSO, Project Manager of the LEANer Study at the Yale School of Public Health and Yale Cancer Center explained that chemotherapy need not be a barrier to making improvements in physical activity and nutrition.

“We showed that women could improve their diet quality and increase their physical activity during chemotherapy when dietitian counseling also helped them cope with side effects,” says Harrigan.

Women in the nutrition and exercise intervention group had greater improvements in exercise and diet quality. Completing the full dose of chemotherapy was equally high among women in the lifestyle intervention and in the usual care group.

Importantly, women randomly assigned to the nutrition and exercise group intervention were more likely to have a PCR than those who received standard care.

“This finding provides an exciting new possibility that diet and exercise can influence chemotherapy outcomes through factors other than just how much chemotherapy was completed,” says Harrigan.

Counseling by oncology specialist dietitians enabled women going through breast cancer treatment to develop positive diet and physical activity habits closely aligned with AICR's Cancer Prevention Recommendations.

Plus, this intervention did not involve extreme changes, but simply helped people more closely follow a healthy lifestyle.



## RELIABLE RESEARCH: Using Science to Separate Fact from Fiction

*Exploring cancer myths and sharing science-driven facts.*

### Q & A ABOUT CANCER MYTHS

AICR's Karen Collins, MS, RDN, CDN, FAND (nutrition consultant) and Nigel Brockton, PhD (VP of Research) joined together for a webinar presentation at Oldways, a food and nutrition non-profit organization. Their presentation, titled "Diet & Lifestyle for Cancer Prevention and Survivorship," generated many fascinating audience questions, including the following:

#### Is wine better than other alcohol? Do antioxidants in wine have a protective effect on cancer?

The risk for developing some types of cancer increases with as little as one drink per day, even if you only drink wine. Overall, the greater your alcohol consumption, the greater your cancer risk.



All types of alcohol, including wine, beer and liquor, increase cancer risk. There is no "better alcohol" when it comes to cancer risk.

But what about the antioxidants in wine? While wine does contain polyphenol antioxidants, it still contains alcohol, which is not beneficial. Eating foods that are rich in polyphenols, such as grapes, berries and cherries, is a better way to get more antioxidants instead of drinking wine.

For cancer prevention, AICR recommends not drinking alcohol. If you do drink, limit it to no more than two standard drinks a day for men and one standard drink a day for women. One standard drink is:

- 5 ounces of wine
- 12 ounces of regular beer
- 1½ ounces of liquor

#### Does activity need to be aerobic to have beneficial effects? What about resistance exercise or stretching/yoga?

Aerobic exercise, such as brisk walking, is well-known for promoting cardiovascular benefits. It's

an integral part of any fitness plan, but it's not the only part! Resistance exercise and stretching offer significant advantages, too. Your best bet is to include all types of exercise in your physical activity routine.

Resistance exercise, such as squats and lunges, helps enhance muscle strength and bone density. Stretching and activities such as yoga are less intense cardiovascular workouts, but are vital because they promote flexibility and balance, help alleviate stress and may contribute to mental well-being.

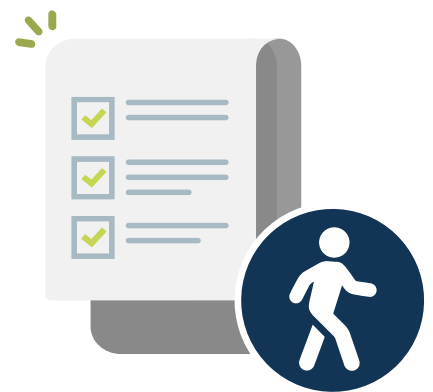
AICR supports the recommendations made by Moving Through Cancer, an initiative led by the American College of Sports Medicine. They recommend:

- A minimum of 150 minutes per week of aerobic activity
- Two days a week of resistance exercise or strength training
- Stretching as a warm up and cool down activity (before and after exercise)

#### Are there different AICR Recommendations for Cancer Prevention compared to cancer survivorship?

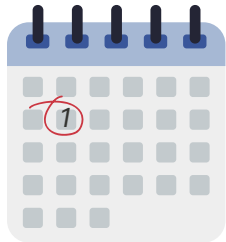
Overall, AICR's Cancer Prevention Recommendations, which include advice about nutrition and physical activity, should also be followed by cancer survivors.

AICR is working on developing specific advice for people after a cancer diagnosis, and the information may differ slightly based on the type of cancer and treatment received. Guidelines for survivorship need to be more context-dependent than blanket statements about cancer prevention. However, using the Cancer Prevention Recommendations is good advice. Learn more on page 5, which explains why nutrition and physical activity are important parts of a cancer treatment plan.



# Physical Activity:

## Part of Your Cancer Treatment Plan



**From day one, exercise should be considered alongside treatment for improved outcomes.**

After a cancer diagnosis, eating well and being active can help you throughout chemotherapy, radiation therapy and surgery. Aim to follow AICR's Cancer Prevention Recommendations during treatment.\*

### ACTIVITY CAN HELP:

- Reduce symptoms of treatment-related side effects
- Elevate mood
- Reduce anxiety and depression
- Improve sleep
- Boost energy levels and reduce fatigue
- Maintain physical functioning
- Support bone health
- Improve quality of life

**\*Work with your oncologist or an exercise specialist to set up your personal exercise plan.**

### WHAT TYPE OF ACTIVITY IS BEST?

- Any physical activity is better than no physical activity.
- If you are new to exercise, start slowly and listen to your body.
- Include both **aerobic activity** such as walking and swimming, and **strength training** such as free weights and squats.

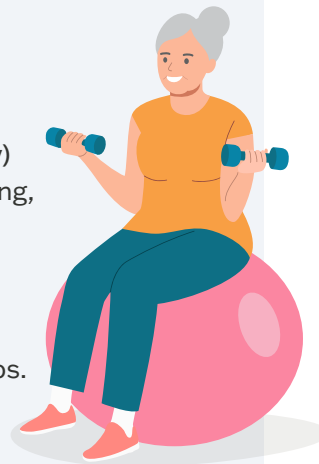
### HOW MUCH ACTIVITY?

Aim for 2.5 to 5 hours per week (~20–40mins /day) of moderate-intensity activity such as brisk walking, biking or vacuuming.

#### OR

1.25 to 2.5 hours per week (~10–20mins/day) of vigorous activity such as running or swimming laps.

**Being physically active is associated with 26%–69% improved cancer-specific survival.**



**Follow AICR's Cancer Prevention Recommendations after diagnosis for beneficial effects on survivorship and quality of life.**

# Twice a Survivor, Always a Philanthropist



## The Consuelo C. Ford Breast Cancer Research Fund Has Been Established at AICR

Consuelo (Connie) Carmen Ford was born in Manila, where her father was president of the Philippine Trust Company. After the Japanese invasion of the Philippines during World War II, eight-year-old Connie and her family were forced into an internment camp.

During their three years at the camp, the family of six lived in a shanty. Connie learned about life's hardships, such as hunger, cramped living conditions and inhumane treatment. These hardships created a sense of survivorship in Connie.

Upon liberation in 1945, the family returned home to San Jose, California, where relatives helped them rebuild their lives. Connie earned a degree in business administration from San Jose State College. She worked at Lockheed Missiles and Space Company where she became a systems engineer and tracked space vehicles using mostly slide rules and manual plotting trajectories.

Over those years, Connie lived frugally. She invested in the stock market and taught herself how to navigate company prospectuses and yearly reports. Her determination slowly began to pay off. After 31 years, Connie retired as a quality engineer in product assurance.

In retirement, Connie enjoyed downhill and cross-country skiing, hiking, swimming and golf. Unfortunately, these activities were interrupted by a breast cancer diagnosis. After her recovery, Connie developed a desire to give back. Because of her illness and her concern for others, she researched cancer organizations. Connie saw AICR as an organization that can increase our understanding of cancer, with the hope that others can be helped through research and education.

Sadly, Connie passed away in 2022, at age 89. She was a caring person who lived life on her terms.

Although she is dearly missed, Connie's memory lives on. In her trust, she named AICR to receive a bequest to fund breast cancer research. Connie's gift of \$1.6 million established the Consuelo C. Ford Breast Cancer Research Fund. It will be used to fund research grants for many years to come.



CONNIE CARMEN FORD

### ASK THE FINANCIAL EXPERT...

**Q:** Every year my husband and I give our entire required minimum distribution to various charities, including AICR. We'd like to continue our support through our estate plan, but feel we must leave everything to the special needs trust we established for our only child, who has severe handicaps. Is there any way we can accomplish both goals?

**A:** It is completely understandable that you arrange for the care of your child through your estate plan. One option to consider is a charitable remainder trust, funded with assets from your IRAs, that will make payments annually for your child's lifetime. The remainder trust payments can be distributed to the special needs trust, with no loss to income tax, and used as provided for in the trust. When the remainder trust ends at your child's death, assets are distributed to the charities you name in the trust. You can direct that only a certain portion of your IRAs be used to fund the charitable remainder trust, with the balance passing outright to the special needs trust.

**Questions?** Please contact AICR at 1-800-843-8114.

# Smart Shopping Tips for a Plant-Based Diet

## *Tips and tricks to navigate the grocery store.*

Plant-based eating is a powerful ally for cancer prevention and survivorship. Research shows that plant foods are rich in cancer-fighting compounds.

If you're new to plant-based eating, the idea of making the switch might seem daunting. AICR can help! Your first step is to stock your fridge and pantry with staple foods for a plant-based diet. Here's your guide to plant-based grocery shopping.

### What Is a Plant-Based Diet?

Plant-based foods include vegetables, fruits, grains, nuts, seeds and beans. But a plant-based diet is more flexible than you might think. It can also include some animal-based foods, such as poultry, eggs, dairy and fish. Limited amounts of red meat can fit, too.

The key lies in the proportions. AICR's New American Plate suggests filling at least two-thirds of your plate with plant foods, and the remaining one-third can be plant or animal-based foods.

### Head to the Supermarket

**A Rainbow of Produce:** Start in the produce section for vegetables and fruits. Choose leafy greens, berries, cruciferous vegetables like broccoli and cabbage, and orange fruits and vegetables like winter squash, carrots and cantaloupe. Frozen options are as healthy as fresh.

**Whole Grains:** Choose fiber-rich whole grains such as:

- Whole grain wheat: Also called spelt, kamut, wheatberries, farro and emmer
- Oats
- Barley
- Millet
- Quinoa
- Brown or wild rice

You can also choose bread, noodles and crackers that are made from any of these whole grains.

**Plant Proteins:** Buy beans and lentils, which offer protein, fiber, vitamins and minerals. Dried and canned beans are economical. Soy foods such as tofu, tempeh and edamame are also excellent choices.

**Nuts and Seeds:** Choose an assortment of nuts, nut butters and seeds for their healthy fats, protein and cancer-fighting compounds. Enjoy a handful of almonds, walnuts and cashews, or any mix of nuts and seeds daily.

**Choose Carefully:** Not every plant food promotes health. Some choices are high in sodium, unhealthy fats and added refined starches or sugars. Check labels rather than assuming that something is healthy just because it's a plant-based food.



### Super-Marketing Tricks

Grocery store layout is a science! Beware of these three marketing tactics that make you spend more:

- Products sold at eye-level are prime real estate that manufacturers pay extra for, and you will too. Look above or below for lower-priced items and store brands instead.
- Items at the checkout are impulse buys. Candy bars and soda won't be as tempting if you shop after a meal and aren't very hungry.
- Milk is on most grocery lists, so stores place it as far from the entrance as possible. That way, you walk through the whole store to get it, and will likely pick up more items (and spend more money). Make a shopping list and stick to it.

# Researcher Spotlight: AICR Grantee Dr. Kristin Campbell

*Learn how your support funds groundbreaking cancer research.*

AICR Grant Recipient Kristin Campbell BSc, PT, PhD is a licensed physical therapist and a professor in the Department of Physical Therapy at the University of British Columbia (BC). She also holds an appointment in the Cancer Control Program at the BC Cancer Research Center.

Dr. Campbell's research is focused on understanding the role of exercise in reducing risk of cancer, and the role of physical therapy and exercise to improve the physical function, quality of life and survival of cancer survivors.

AICR spoke with Dr. Campbell about her journey and current research.

## Dr. Campbell's Journey

Dr. Campbell says that in high school, her favorite subject was biology. She also loved playing sports, so becoming a physical therapist was a logical career.

In the 1990s, her interest in physical therapy and women's health coincided with the emerging research on the potential role of exercise as a modifiable factor for breast cancer risk. This combination set her on the path to better understand the biology of exercise for cancer prevention, and later into the field of cancer rehabilitation.

## Current Research

Dr. Campbell says that the funding from AICR allows her team to better understand the impact of exercise

after a cancer diagnosis, specifically related to changes in body composition.

"There is emerging research that for early-stage cancer, a loss of muscle mass during and after treatment is associated with poorer all-cause and cancer specific mortality," says Dr. Campbell. "One potential intervention to address this issue is targeted exercise interventions that could limit the amount of muscle loss or to help individuals to gain muscle during, and just following, cancer treatments."

Her current project takes advantage of a very large exercise study in people with stage II-III colon cancer. While the original study looks at the effect of the intervention on cancer outcomes, her team is looking specifically at unique measures of body composition using computer-tomography (CT) scans.

This allows them to look at the amount and quality of muscle and body fat distribution to better understand the potential effect exercise can have on biological markers of poorer outcomes.

Dr. Campbell is appreciative of AICR's funding, which comes from supporters like you. "Without AICR's supporters, much of this important work could be overlooked, and people facing cancer would not be able to make informed lifestyle choices to reduce their cancer risk or how to thrive after a cancer diagnosis," says Dr. Campbell.



KRISTIN CAMPBELL  
BSC, PT, PHD

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Occasionally we rent this list or exchange lists with other organizations in order to maintain an active donor file to support AICR's services. If you do not wish to participate in this program, please let us know.



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# How Lifestyle Changes Can Impact Colorectal Cancer Survivors

## *How CUP Global's research on colorectal cancer may shape advice on physical activity and nutrition.*

If you have been diagnosed with colorectal cancer, you may be wondering about what lifestyle changes you can make to improve how you feel and to help you live longer.

The Global Cancer Update Program (CUP Global) is the flagship research program of the World Cancer Research Fund network, which includes AICR. CUP Global provides a global analysis of scientific research into the link between diet, physical activity, weight and cancer.

Recently, CUP Global's research on how nutrition, diet and physical activity impact the after-effects and survival following a colorectal cancer diagnosis was published in prestigious research journals.

Using a large database of worldwide research studies, the CUP Global team performed a comprehensive review of the available literature. A panel of leading cancer experts in cancer prevention and survivorship interpreted the results, and here's what they learned.

### Physical Activity

The studies showed that being physically active reduces the chances of colorectal cancer-related health problems and death by between 13 and 60 percent. It can be any exercise, from a structured fitness class to carefree recreational activity.

Plus, the amount of exercise was not that important, as long as you do some. Activity levels from low intensity to up to five hours of moderate-intensity activity per week showed a benefit. The experts recommend against a sedentary lifestyle with no activity.

### Nutrition

Certain dietary measures may reduce the risk of death from any cause, not just cancer. The researchers found benefit in eating a balanced plant-based or Mediterranean-style diet. No single plant-forward diet is best; the key is that it is built

around vegetables, fruits, beans, whole grains and nuts.

Including whole grains as part of a plant-focused diet is associated with better outcomes after colorectal cancer. Good options are oats, brown rice or whole wheat.

Frequently consuming sugary drinks increases the risk of health problems and of early death. It's best to limit sugary beverages such as soda, sweet tea and fruity drinks.

The report links regular consumption of regular or decaf coffee with lower risk of death from all causes after colorectal cancer. Just make sure your coffee is not loaded with sugar.

### What's Next for Future Research?

To improve colorectal cancer survivorship, we need research that provides answers to these questions:

What are the most important steps for a healthy diet after colon cancer? What kind of exercise program is most helpful after colon cancer?

This new research can lead to even clearer recommendations on how to make the most impactful lifestyle changes. We need more studies on nutrition and physical activity to fully understand their effects before and after a colon cancer diagnosis. AICR continues to support this important research.

**If you have colorectal cancer, consider these lifestyle changes, as you are able. Work with a dietitian to learn more.**

- Eat more plant foods, such as vegetables and beans.
- Consume a diet rich in whole grains.
- Limit sugary drinks; choose water or unsweetened coffee/tea instead.
- Incorporate physical activity into your day.

