



***Soy And The Cancer Connection
- New Evidence In An Ongoing Debate.***

Breast cancer is the leading cause of death for North American women between the ages of 35 and 50. Approximately 1 in 9 women will develop breast cancer, a rate which has increased from 1 in 20 in the 1920's. Although it is prevalent and seemingly on the rise in North America, breast cancer is much less common in other parts of the world. As a result diet, lifestyle and environmental factors are believed to play a significant role in its occurrence. In particular the consumption of soy has been the most hotly debated, with strong arguments being made by both sides.

For some time soy has been touted for its beneficial effects in the prevention of heart disease, and osteoporosis, its relief of menopausal symptoms and now new evidence further supports its role in the prevention of cancer. According to the *Journal of the National Cancer Institute* (2006, 98:459-471) in a recent review of 18 studies researchers at John Hopkins School of Medicine *concluded that soy can decrease the risk of developing breast and other types of cancer.*

Compared to their North American counterparts, Japanese women have lower rates of breast cancer, heart disease, and osteoporosis and experience fewer and less severe menopausal symptoms. This was confirmed in the previously mentioned studies, which showed an increase in the risk of breast cancer in Asian females who relocated to western countries. Therefore definitively ruling out genetic factors as the reason for the difference in breast cancer incidence between the two regions. In particular this change was associated with a decrease in the consumption of soy products, which contain phytoestrogens (plant based estrogens). These studies also showed a direct connection between the amount of soy eaten in the diet and a reduction in the risk of breast cancer, lending support to previous which suggest *a serving of soy per day (i.e. 1 cup of soy milk or ½ cup tofu) may decrease the risk of developing a wide range of cancers.* In regards to the question of avoiding soy in those at risk of developing breast cancer Dr. Susan Love M.D. states, "I don't think so. We don't know how to translate laboratory data to actual women. But the epidemiological data are pretty compelling."

While increasing the consumption of soy isoflavones (the active ingredient in soy products) to the 100 mg per day consumed by Asian women, from the 1 to

3 mgs consumed by the average North American women is one step in the prevention of cancer, there are many other steps you can take to decrease your risk even further. It is estimated that *approximately 80-85% of all cancers can be prevented with a healthy diet and lifestyle*. A licensed and qualified Naturopathic Doctor can not only help determine the appropriate nutrition program for you, but can also provide support for the immune system and organs of detoxification and elimination using herbs, acupuncture, oriental medicine, homeopathic medicines as well as lifestyle counseling. In the fight against breast cancer, prevention is the key. Consult a Doctor of Naturopathic Medicine and maximize your healing potential today.

Valerie Franc completed her training as a Doctor of Naturopathic Medicine at the Canadian College of Naturopathic Medicine in 2000. She has an undergraduate degree in Nutritional Sciences and is a Board Certified Hypnotherapist. Firmly Committed to communicating naturopathic principles and philosophies, she regularly offers personal development courses and public lectures. Currently she is expanding her practice and can be contacted at M&Y Chiropractic at (905)-898-6644.