

Top 10 foods that prevent breast cancer

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(Top 10 foods that prevent...)

The [World Health Organisation \(WHO\)](#) has predicted that by 2020 the number of [breast cancer](#) cases will jump to an alarming figure and one in every eight [women](#) would run the risk of developing the disease in her lifetime.

The Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) too, concluded that over the last two decades there has been a steep rise in the statistics pertaining to women being diagnosed with breast cancer. So grave is the scenario that in India, breast cancer has been declared the most common form of cancer, almost surpassing cervical cancer as the deadliest of all cancers. Early detection and regular medical-checkups are compulsory, but at the same time it is important that our diet and the food we eat prepare us to fight malignant cancer cells at the onset.

Tina Sapra, senior clinical nutritionist & coordinator with Fortis Memorial Research Institute and Dr Vandana Mathur, consulting nutritionist, Metropolis Healthcare, Mumbai, give us an insight into the top foods that can prevent breast cancer risk in women. The doctors discuss age groups most vulnerable to the disease and also inform us about the foods that should be avoided in daily diet to keep cancer cell growth in check.

Foods that prevent Breast Cancer



Flaxseed

You can get flax either as whole seed, ground or flaxseed oil. The omega-3s, lignans and fibre found in flaxseed are found to form a protective shield against cancer cells responsible for causing breast cancer. Include flax to yogurt or a smoothie to create a richer and nutty flavour. You can add flaxseed oil to salad dressings too or integrate them into baked goods, such as cookies or muffins.

Brazil nuts

Uniquely rich in selenium, fibre, and phytochemicals, Brazil nuts can help fight inflammation, improve the immune system and prevent tumour growth. And you do not need many of them—a palmful can do the trick. Enjoy them as any other nut either with fruits or asparagus (contains the anti-cancer component, chlorophyll).

Garlic

Rich source of cancer-fighting compound called allium, garlic and its relatives (onion, leeks, scallions, and chives) are shown to slow tumour growth and prevent breast cancer risk among other forms of cancer such as colorectal and prostate cancers. Garlic and onions are found in a variety of foods including Italian, Spanish, Indian, Thai and Chinese dishes. Crush or swallow a piece of garlic every morning and that's all it takes to live a cancer-free life!



Pomegranate

This is highly recommended for preventing breast cancer. It contains polyphenol- an ellagic acid with anti-oxidant properties that prevent cancer growth. Include this delicious fruit in your diet and discover effective health benefits.

Dark-green leafy vegetables

From kale, collards to spinach and Swiss chard, dark-green leafy vegetables probably are considered a "one stop shop" for all the best nutrients your body needs to fend off cancerous cells, i.e. fibre, vitamin B, phytochemicals, chlorophyll and more. It's time to add some greens to your diet.



Salmon

A great source of omega-3s and vitamins B12 and D, salmon can provide your body with the nutrients it needs to regulate cell growth and prevent cancer. In fact, certain types of Vitamin B12 (methylcobalamin) are proven effective in cancer treatment. Steam it, bake it, grill it or saute it. This fish is a great option and pairs well with many foods like garlic, dark-green leafy vegetables, turmeric, peppers and broccoli.

Broccoli and broccoli sprouts

As a cruciferous (belonging to the plant family Cruciferae) vegetable along with cauliflower, [brussels](#) sprouts, cabbage and kale; broccoli is rich in sulforophane and indoles, which are shown to regulate cell growth in multiple ways and help fight a range of cancers, including breast, bladder, lymphoma, prostate and lung cancer.



Green tea

Consumption on a regular basis has been linked to lower incidence of breast cancer. The phyto-chemicals in green tea can well take the credit for its health benefits. One to two cups of green tea daily can help you keep cancer at bay.

Peppers

Pick a pepper, any pepper! Most have some phytochemical or nutrient that will help fight cancer. Chilli and jalapeno peppers have capsaicin (an active component of chilli peppers) that fight the growth rate of cancer cells. Green peppers are rich in chlorophyll which can bind cancer-causing carcinogens found in the gut. Red peppers have both capsaicin and antioxidant carotenoids. Put them in a vegetable stir-fry or eat them with hummus.

Turmeric

A spice commonly found in our country cancer-fighting compound called curcumin can inhibit many types of cancer cells, including breast, gastrointestinal, lung, and skin cancer. A pinch of turmeric fights toughest of cancer-causing cells.

Other breast-cancer-fighting-foods are

Walnuts

Abundant in omega-3-fatty acids, natural phytosterols and antioxidants, walnuts make for an ideal anti-breast cancer food.

Berries

All berries are rich sources of antioxidants and phytochemicals which play a role in reducing oxidation and cancer cell formation in the body. Add some blueberries to your morning cereal, put a few raspberries in plain yogurt for a snack, or enjoy strawberries with a piece of dark chocolate for an evening snack.

Whole grains

Rich in fibre, essential vitamins and minerals; choose whole grains such as quinoa, barley, oats, amaranth, brown rice, and whole wheat over their refined, white counterparts. Heat them in the morning with some milk and cinnamon and have it as a warm cereal, or make a side dish out of it by boiling and simmering it for half an hour for dinner.

Legumes

Lentils and beans contain folate (folic acid), fibre and a host of nutrients that prevent cancer risk.

Age-group(s) at the highest risk of breast cancer

Tina Sapra explains that breast cancer is less common at a young age (30s), but younger women tend to have more aggressive breast cancers than older women. This may explain why survival rates are lower among younger women. According to the [American Cancer Society](#), 95 per cent of new cases and 97 per cent of breast cancer deaths occurred in women aged 40 years or above.

Say no to

Alcohol (even moderate intake can up cancer risk)

Refined carbohydrates (comprise flour and added sugar)

Low-fat and low carb snacks (candies, cakes, chips, soda)

Red meat (beef, pork, mutton), grilled meat creates compounds called heterocyclic amines linked to breast cancer risk

Avoid foods that contain saturated and trans-fats (most likely to be found in fried foods)

Best diet formula

Lead a healthy and disease-resistant life with a diet high in fruits and vegetables, whole grains, lean meat and dairy products.

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