



# Lifestyle and Cancer

Autumn 2010

## Cancernet - UK Newsletter



### Welcome to this newsletter

This Newsletter aims to highlight topical issues, interesting studies and announcements which add to our understanding of lifestyle and cancer. We, the Cancernet team, screen the world literature for studies which show how lifestyle can reduce the risk of cancer, improve wellbeing during and after treatments and reduce the risk of relapse. [Read more](#)

### In the news

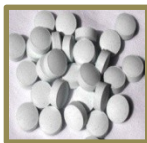
#### Multivitamins - Not helpful after Colon Cancer:

Researchers at Dana-Farber Cancer Institute did not find that multivitamin use prolonged life or decreased time to recurrence. More than 1,000 subjects participated in this study and the findings are consistent with other studies that did not find benefit from multivitamins in colon cancer treatment and survival. Any benefits in correcting a nutritional deficiency with an “off the shelf supplement” were likely to be counterbalanced by over correction of a normal level (also known to be harmful). Individuals thinking of taking a nutritional supplement are advised to test their baseline blood levels first. [Read more](#)



#### Aspirin reduces Bowel Cancer risk:

A study published in the medical journal Gut found that people who take even a very low dose of aspirin (75mg) every day for five years can cut the risk of



### Contents of this issue

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developing colon cancer by almost a third. Don't forget, however, that natural aspirin (salicylates) can be found in vegetables and individuals with a high consumption have higher blood levels.

#### Turmeric benefits investigated:

Oklahoma Medical Research Foundation scientists are studying the effects of curcumin, a chemical in the spice turmeric, on prostate cancer.

Turmeric is a widely used spice in Asia, where the rate of prostate cancer is much low. So far, published studies have shown that curcumin can induce death in some cancer cells, which absorb more of the chemical than normal cells – research continues.



**Alcohol increases breast cancer recurrence risk:** A study published in the Journal of Clinical Oncology showed that drinking 3-4 alcoholic drinks a week raised the risk for breast cancer recurrence by 1.5 times in women who were postmenopausal or overweight. [Read more](#)



**Compounds in skin cream may increase breast cancer risk:** Reports on research from the San Antonio Breast Cancer Symposium finding that six widely available moisturizers contain oestrogen-like preservative that could increase breast cancer risk if absorbed through the skin. One researcher urged women with breast cancer to forgo using these topical moisturizers, as they may interfere with their treatment but instead use natural oil based creams.



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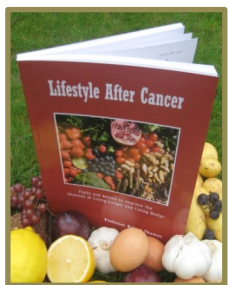
## Announcements

### Online micro-nutrient test launched:



[Cancernet](#) have teamed up a major laboratory to make micro-nutritional testing, easier, more readily available and more cost effective. The pros and cons of the [Micro-Nutritional testing](#) are discussed in the guest article in this newsletter.

### “Lifestyle and cancer – the facts”



**Long awaited new edition released** - Like the first edition, this book addresses the evidence behind practical lifestyle choices which confront individuals on a daily basis. This version has been extensively updated in response to new international research and positive feedback from readers. [Read more](#)

### New cancer survivorship advisory group



Macmillan have established a new exercise, lifestyle and cancer advisory committee. A team of UK experts will now advising on ways to help individuals exercise and live healthy after cancer.

### Gyms to take on cancer rehabilitation?



**The first steps** to allow municipal gym to take on the main role for exercise rehabilitation in the UK have been approved. The regulatory authority “Skills Active” announced in August the standards for a new course in cancer exercise rehabilitation. Exercise professionals can now get qualified to take referrals from doctors.

### Royal Homeopathic Hospital change.



Has changed its name to the Royal London Hospital For Integrative Medicine, reflecting the wide range of complementary therapies available. It remains is the largest public sector provider in Europe.

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## Poem of the month

Over [300 poems](#) have been submitted to Cancernet:

“I’m living with the image that cancer left with me,  
I know the fears cancer has made me see.  
I am more than what cancer had made me be,  
And I will live my life totally cancer free.

Cancer is a hard battle no one should have to fight.  
Tossing and turning throughout the whole night.  
Trying so hard to reach toward the light.  
Sometimes wanting to just give up the fight.

But we all must hang in there and be very strong.  
The battle will end soon it won’t take too long.  
I will overcome cancer because I am strong.  
With only happy thoughts nothing will go wrong”

## Top tips - avoid carcinogens

There are thousands of potential cancer-forming chemicals (carcinogens) in our environment. Common examples include acrylamides from super heated foods and hydrocarbons from burnt foods. It is impossible to eliminate contact with all of them but here are some practical tips to reduce the level of exposure.



### General carcinogens

- Steer clear of heavily processed foods
- Avoid foods high in additives and preservatives
- Avoid unhealthy [fats, salt and sugars](#)
- Avoid reheating fats and oils
- Avoid super-heated snacks such crisps, chips cheap breakfast cereals, doughnut and biscuits
- Avoid smoked, barbequed or burnt foods
- Reduce [cheap meat](#) intake
- Increase [antioxidant](#) intake to counterbalance risk e.g. spices, fruit, berries, [raw vegetables](#)
- [Stop smoking](#), avoid passive smoke
- Avoid burning paraffin candles

### Pesticides, herbicides and fertilizers:

- Buy a good salad spinner
- Soak lettuce and herbs thoroughly before eating
- Wash fruit before eating
- Wash vegetables, change water before cooking
- Buy [organic foods](#) if possible

### Xenoestrogens and metaloestrogens:

- Avoid petrol, diesel fumes
- Use hydrocarbon free [cosmetics and lip salves](#)
- Avoid excessive amounts of [antiperspirants](#)
- Use soap instead of paraben rich shower gels
- Use glass rather than plastic bottles
- Try not to re-use plastic water bottles
- Rinse soap & detergents thoroughly from dishes
- Avoid storing food in plastic food containers
- Avoid rapping food in plastic film

## Healthy menu of the month

This is a really tasty , easy to make cheap meal packed full of anti-oxidants, healthy fats and vitamins

### Quinoa curry

#### Ingredients:

- 1 Cup Quinoa
- 1½ Tbsp. Virgin olive Oil
- ½ Onion Diced
- 1 Tsp. Grated Fresh Ginger Root
- ½ Fresh chopped Green Chile
- 1 Heaping Tsp. Turmeric
- 1 Heaping Tsp. Coriander
- ¼ Tsp. Ground Cinnamon
- 1¾ Cups Water
- ½ Cup Fresh or Frozen Peas
- Herb salt to taste



#### Cooking instructions:

- Add oil and diced onions to a saucepan or wok.
  - Saute the onions on medium heat for 3-4 minutes.
  - Add the ginger root, chile, and rinsed quinoa.
  - Cook for one minute stirring constantly.
  - White spiral appears around the grain as it cooks.
  - Stir in the turmeric, coriander, cinnamon, and salt.
  - Cook for one minute stirring constantly.
  - Add the water and bring it to a boil.
  - Cover, reduce heat, and simmer for 15 minutes.
  - Stir in peas.
  - Cover and cook for 3-4 or five minutes
  - Peas become are tender
  - Most of the water should have absorbed.
  - Fluff with a fork before serving.
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## Guest article:

### Micronutrient testing pros & cons

It is now firmly established that a **deficiency** of micro-nutrients such as vitamins, essential minerals and fatty acids can lead to an increased risk of cancer. It is also clear from published studies that an **excess** of vitamins or minerals can increase the risks of cancer as well as heart attacks and other diseases. The problem is, even with a normal diet we cannot be certain that we have the correct balance of nutrients to prevent or fight cancer. One way to ensure the correct amounts of vital nutrients in your diet is to measure the body's levels.

### Why are micro nutrients important for the cancer process?

Vitamins, essential minerals and fatty acids cannot be made by the body so have to be ingested or absorbed. They are crucial components of enzymes and chemicals required for metabolism and efficient day to day function of the body. Although, in Western Society, gross deficiency diseases such as scurvy and beri beri are rare, minor deficiencies may develop that can cause imbalances in the regulatory and immunogenic processes.



**Copper, zinc, selenium and manganese** are all required to make the three main antioxidant enzymes catalase, glutathione S-transferase glutathione; superoxide dismutase. Deficiencies in these have been shown to reduce the ability to mop up free radicals generated by carcinogens. A study from China, for example, gave selenium to the inhabitants of one of two villages both known to have low selenium in the food chain. After 2 years, the risk of liver cancer had substantially reduced in the village which received selenium. This proved that correcting a selenium deficiency reduces the risk of cancer.

**Vitamin A** added to cancer cells slows growth rates and encourages them to die (apoptosis).

A study from California showed that cells deficient in **vitamin B** are more susceptible to DNA damage after carcinogenic exposure. **Vitamin C** is involved in the mechanism which enables DNA to 'sense' the damage done by free radicals, by integrating with the iron imbedded in DNA. This process facilitates DNA repair and is therefore a significant aspect of immune surveillance. **Vitamin D** has been shown to reduce proliferation, promote differentiation, inhibit invasion, angiogenesis, prevent loss of adhesion, promote apoptosis. Clinical studies have shown that those survivors of bowel and breast cancer with regular exposure to sunlight had a lower incidence of subsequent relapse. **Vitamin E** has direct antioxidant effects and prevents cancer cells de-differentiating into more aggressive forms. A study from Finland showed that people with higher serum vitamin E levels had a low risk of bowel cancer.



**Omega 3, 6 and 9** are not made by the body so also have to be eaten. They are essential for the formation of hormones, particularly those involved in inflammation and immunity (prostaglandins, leukotrienes, hromboxanes). They have COX-2 inhibition properties which in turn has direct anticancer properties. In USA Health professionals Study men who had the highest intake of omega 3 had the lowest incidence of aggressive prostate cancer. The long chain omega-3's, Eicosapentaenoic acid (EPA) and Docosahexaenoic acid (DHA), are particularly healthy and these can be made in the body from the short chain omega-3, Alpha-linolenic acid (LLA). Omega-6 however blocks this process so the ratio of omega 3:6 is important. Ideally it should be 1:2 or 1:3 but in most western societies the ratio are generally much higher as omega-3's have been removed from our food chain via intensive meat farming and fast foods. Laboratory experiments have demonstrated that oleic acid in **olive oil** helps repair DNA damage caused by excessive sunlight. Olive



oil has also been shown to suppress over-expressed Her-2 protein on breast cancer cells.

### Why not just take a supplement?

At first sight it would seem obvious to boost the body's nutrients with one of the many commercially available supplements – job done and no need to worry! Taking supplements however may do more harm than good as, notwithstanding the expense, they may over correct a baseline normal level. They may also give false confidence that they have sufficient or the correct ingredients to correct a deficiency. Several studies support this statement



The large international SELECT study of selenium and zinc supplementation did not show any benefit in prostate cancer risk and there was a trend towards more aggressive cancers in the selenium group. In the health professional study men who took zinc supplementation over long periods of time actually had a higher risk of prostate cancer.

A study of vitamin A supplements involving 30,000 male smokers, found that there was a reduction in the incidence of prostate cancer, but the incidence of lung cancer was actually higher. A substantial European study gave vitamin E in the form of alpha-tocopherol and Vitamin A supplements in the form of beta carotene to individuals who were either heavy smokers, or who had previously had cancer of the throat. The trial showed an elevated risk of both lung and prostate cancer and a higher rate of cerebral haemorrhage if they also had high blood pressure.

A study from Norway gave vitamin B supplements or placebo to patients with angina or following a heart attack in an attempt to reduce the incidence of another cardiac event. After three years there was no cardiac benefit but a significant increase in cancer. These results were confirmed in a separate post heart-attack study also published in 2009. Men who took folic acid supplements were more than twice as likely to develop prostate cancer compared with men who took a placebo. This study

made another interesting observation: it also found that, independent to whether they took a supplement or not, the prostate cancer incidence was slightly lower in men who had adequate amounts of folate in their diet.

A study from Queensland Australia analysed over a thousand individuals who had been treated for skin cancer. The risk of a further cancer was reduced if individuals ate foods with a high level of dietary antioxidants compared to those who did not, but individuals who took supplements of vitamin E actually had a higher rate of recurrent skin cancers. A further study which supplemented women with alpha-tocopherol, demonstrated no reduction in cancer, but the incidence of heart disease was slightly worse.

Another large human dietary prevention study combined beta-carotene and retinal analogues of vitamin A. People at the start of this study had their serum vitamin A levels measured but all took the same interventional supplement dose. Those participants who started the trial with naturally low blood levels of beta-carotene had lower levels of prostate cancer after years of supplementation. Those people who had adequate blood levels at the start of the study ended up with a higher risk of cancer, particularly prostate. This trial provides a clear take home message, that correcting a natural or acquired deficit is beneficial, but too much is harmful.

### What are the chances of a micro nutrient imbalance after cancer?

Various studies have reported deficiencies among patients after cancer particularly with Vitamin D in the region of 40-60%. Since we started the *cancer risk nutritional profile* service we have also seen Vitamin D levels below normal in over 75% of cases. The most common deficiencies, however, are omega 3, particularly the important long chain varieties. Over 50% so far have also had a mineral deficiency or excess (Particularly zinc and selenium) but no clear pattern of one over another. The ratios of omega 3:6 are consistently greater than 1:5 with some above 1:10. Lycopene and lutein levels have

been deficient in all but one of the men with prostate cancer.

### What are “Cons” of nutritional testing?

The tests are not cheap, they are not usually available on the NHS and most private policies do not cover them. Nevertheless, as the advice provided in the reports aims to restore nutritional harmony with diet and not additional supplements then, in the long term, there is likely to be savings. Secondly, they are snap shot in time, generally reflecting the previous few weeks dietary pattern or even shorter for vitamin C. Provided there has not been a major change in lifestyle over this time, however, they are likely to represent a more global picture but it is advisable to have the test done at a time which reflects the usually day to day pattern as much as possible (e.g. not immediately after a holiday or major illness).

### Conclusions

Published data strong suggest that micronutrient imbalance is a risk for cancer. It also suggests that restoring nutritional harmony reduces the risk, although more randomised controlled trials are clearly needed. Whether this applies after cancer, to reduce the risk of relapse and improve well-being, remains unproven but the assumption is that factors which cause cancer in the first place are usually detrimental afterwards. As an alternative to blind, often costly supplement intake, micro-nutrient testing, such as [The Cancer Risk Nutritional Profile](#), has the advantage of empowering individuals with information and advice relevant to their own make up which can guide them to better informed dietary choices.

### Summary of the data:

A micro nutrients deficiency increases the risk of cancer

An excess of minerals or vitamins increases the risk of cancer and other diseases

Measuring the body’s levels of micro-nutrients can empower individuals with their dietary and supplement choices


For a full list of references see:

[cancernet.co.uk/lifestyle-published-evidence.htm](http://cancernet.co.uk/lifestyle-published-evidence.htm)

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Contact details:

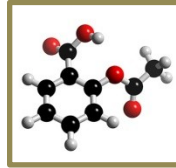
[Health-education@clara.co.uk](mailto:Health-education@clara.co.uk)

The logo for cancernet.co.uk, featuring the text "cancernet.co.uk" in white lowercase letters inside a dark green oval with a gold border.

## Advertisement

### The Cancer Risk Micro-nutrient Profile

This test measures the essential micro nutrients which have been linked to the cancer process and provides a detailed report advising which foods to avoid and which to eat more of:



- Serum Mg, Ca, Mn, Zn, Cu and Selenium.
- Fat soluble vitamin profile, Retinol (Vit A)
- Alpha-tocopherol (Vit E), Beta-Carotene, Vit D
- Antioxidant levels of lycopene & lutein
- Essential fatty acids omega 3, 6 & 9's
- Essential fatty acid ratios
- Common antioxidant levels
- Glutathione peroxidase, Superoxide dismutase

#### To order:

1. Click on [Cancernet.co.uk/nutritional-tests.htm](http://Cancernet.co.uk/nutritional-tests.htm)
2. Simply pay online
3. A blood sample kit will be sent to you
4. Have a blood test and send back to the lab
5. A detailed report will be sent to you
6. Empower your lifestyle choices!

## Advertisement

### Natural lip balms

Cracked and chapped lips are uncomfortably and unsightly. This distressing symptom is common following exposure to sun, wind, after a period of stress, dehydration or during chemotherapy and afterwards. There is evidence that natural oil based creams are better than petroleum based creams.



[Nature-medical lip balm](#) has been specifically design to soothe and moisturize the lips preventing and treating chapping and splitting. It contains only natural waxes and including essential oils specifically selected for their anti-inflammatory and anti-septic properties.

**Available online:** [keep-healthy.com](http://keep-healthy.com)

### “Lifestyle and cancer – the facts”

Foreword by Paula Radcliffe

Following the *sell-out* first edition this book has been extensively re-written with evidence from two more years of international research and feedback from readers from over 5000 sales of the first edition.

It is up-to-date, topical and even more relevant to the stresses of modern day life - You now can be even more confident the book explains the reasons why foods, personal habits and environmental factors can increase or decrease the risks of cancer and other major illnesses and help you recover stronger from cancer treatments

**Available online:** [Cancernet.co.uk/books.htm](http://Cancernet.co.uk/books.htm)

