

Ep 28: Tips to help prevent cancer - making changes that matter

MERYL: Hey everyone. This is your Rebel Nutritionist, back with another Rebel Nutrition Podcast. Welcome, welcome. So today it is me all by myself. So trying to keep you engaged, I think it is a pretty engaging topic that we are talking about.

It is October and of course that means **breast cancer awareness month**. So I do want to talk a little bit about breast cancer? Cause there's a couple of things I would like to clarify, but really I also want to segue into just cancer in general, because I think there's just so many misconceptions around the topic and I want to provide information and clarity and of course education as always.

- Breast cancer

So let's get right into it. Let's talk a little bit about breast cancer. I think there's such a stigma around **understanding risks about understanding even what the BRCA gene is**. So maybe we should start there. I feel like people walk around with, oh, I have this BRCA gene I'm BRCA one and BRCA two positive.

And we feel like it is a death sentence that there's such, like I said, such a stigma around it. I think it's more fear than anything else. So let's talk about what it is, **what the BRCA one and**

BRCA two mutation are. And then we'll get into some of the nitty gritty in terms of the newest research on cancer and how we can really prevent it and recover.

What is BRCA 1 ND 2

So the BRCA one gene and two are **genetic mutations**. What does that even mean? Let's talk about these genes, what they do, what is their responsibility? So the responsibility of BRCA one and BRCA two is actually **when they are working properly, they prevent cancer growth**. They help repair DNA and they help keep our risk for potential unchecked growth, right, unchecked tumor growth. They help keep it in check when they are functioning normally and helpfully.

What happens when you have a mutation in these genes? Is that. There is a misstep, meaning these genes, all of a sudden don't work the way they are supposed to. So now, instead of that, gene being able to control tumor growth and repair DNA, it's like a broken switch.

It cannot control the growth and it can not repair DNA. And **when your body cannot control growth and repair DNA. That is when tumor cells form**. So it's not that the gene itself is dangerous. The gene itself is actually beneficial and protective. It's when there's a mutation in this gene. So **it's like a runaway train instead of the BRCA gene putting the brake on that train**. All of a sudden that train is propelling forward and moving faster and faster and has the potential for great damage. So we need to be very clear on understanding that because when we understand that that **mutation now gives us the predisposition for potential growth, which is any type of cancer, any type of cancer is the uncontrolled growth of cells**.

And the body's inability, the DNA that we have **the inability of the DNA to repair those cells**. I think that is really, really, really important to understand. I'm trying to keep it simple. Like I said, I love science. I think science is sexy. Most of you don't because it's a hard concept to grasp,

but if we can put it in those terms and if you think of what are the things that I can do to stop that runaway train?

I think that's really, really important now today's podcast is not about, we're not talking about treatment options. We're not talking about benefits of prophylaxis, mastectomies and hysterectomies, and things like that. That is not today, although I would love to have that conversation and anybody who's listening, who would like to come on and have that amazing conversation with me.

Let's do it. I love to talk to a physician out there who is doing this kind of work. So anybody knows anybody, feel free to send them my way. In any case, let's talk about where the strategies need to be and how we can really affect our ability to prevent cancer there. Are many, many studies on cancer research, some in favor or some not in favor it's in terms of lifestyle, but it is indisputable that cumulated in all of the recent data that I, I was able to discover and I'm talking less than two years old.

Lifestyle changes on cancer

Okay. The most recent reports estimate that **successful lifestyle changes could prevent 30 to 40% of cases of cancer**. This is not just breast cancer. This is all types of cancer. And although we talk about breast cancer, In the month of October. And then we talk about, I believe it's prostate cancer in November.

There are **200 different types of cancers**. We don't even have enough months in the year to cover that, but think about that 200 different types of cancers and the statistics are

staggering. **One out of three women and one out of two men will probably be diagnosed with cancer at some time in their lifetime.**

This is now becoming a chronic issue. It is not just one-off incidents and some reports are showing by the year 2040 into 2050, every single person will have had some type of cancer in their lifetime. Those are staggering statistics. So we need to take a step back and say, **what can we do if 30 to 40% can be prevented?**

Why are we not paying more attention to this? So this is where I get all fired up because this. The work that we do every day. So on one of the studies, it says **these reductions will only be achieved if we can implement targeted prevention programs** for high-risk women and men and in population-based screening programs during childhood, adolescence, early adulthood, when, when we know we are susceptible to carcinogens and our body is rapidly developing, and yet we keep pumping our kids with sugar, the rates of diabetes and obesity in our children is just skyrocketing.

If we don't think that this is not somehow linked to cancer. I don't know what hole everyone is living in. These things, **these lifestyle choices, and these preventive strategies are available and we need to start when we are young**, we need to start **feeding our children better**. We need to **have them move**. And we're going to talk about this in a second, and I'm not just focusing on kids, it's adults too, but it has to start early on.

We cannot wait until we are adults to start with prevention. And I always feel, and I have said before, We are a reactive culture. We are not a preventative culture. And we have got to start to

shift that paradigm. If we really want to live long healthy lives, there have been many, many studies and the statistics are also staggering on the mortality rate that, that our children are expected to have shorter lifespans because of these diseases, these preventable diseases, cancer is just one heart disease is another diabetes, blood pressure, all of these things that are preventable, are shortening, not just our lifespans, but our children's. And so, like I said, I am so passionate about this because I see it every day.

I see the opportunity for prevention and I don't understand why we don't pay closer attention to these lifestyle things that we can, that we can offset. We think that we find the answer at the bottom of a pill bottle, it just will never happen. So let's talk about what is it that we need to do that is related to our lifestyle that will help with the prevention of cancer.

Lifestyle changes

So I'm reading these in no particular order, but. Again, most of these things are preventable. So the things that are the best lifestyle changes that we can make. That will help us reduce our risk of cancer are, and these are in no particular order, **reducing our intake of processed fats**. And I say processed fats because we now know there is ample amount of literature that overall fats in the diet are not linked to increased risk of cancer, but yet it's the type of fat and the processed fats. We blamed it a lot on saturated fats, but now what we are finding out that it's not saturated fats, and I'm going to read an excerpt from a study that was done late last year, late 2020. We know that it's processed fats because **processed fats change the composition of not only ourselves and how they react, but it changes the composition of our gut microbiome**. Our gut microbiome, our gut health is the key to our immune system or partially

the key to our immune system and how those processed fats change. The lining of our gut is of particular interest in, in the research.

Now, when it comes to fats, one of the areas, like I said, we used to say red meat, red meat, red meat. Now we're able to dial down and say, it's not so much the red meat. It's how is the meat processed? So one of the things. That we need to talk about is how are you cooking your meat? Because **we know some of this processing that we're talking about is linked to chargrilling.**

It is that burning of the meat. It's when we grill it, it's when we make it that Blackish brownish color, that charring that actually is, and has the biggest carcinogenic impact that charring causes things called TCAs, tricyclic, amines. That's just, that's an abbreviated version for it, but. It basically **causes these chemicals to form on the outside of the meat that are carcinogenic to the body.**

So it's not the red meat itself. It's how is the red meat cooked? And then the other thing is, is the type of red meat. So we do know that factory processed meat, meat that is fed grain. Instead of grass has a very, very different fatty acid composition. Then grass fed meat, grass fed cows are supposed to eat grass, **grass-fed meat has actually potentially beneficial things like conjugated, linoleic acid, beneficial fats that are supportive to our health** rather than detrimental. So that is really important to listen to because all we are being told from, from many of the doctors and from many of the practitioners who are out there who are not up on the latest research, we just are told point blank.

Don't eat. And don't eat fat. And so what we know is that data has shown that **the composition of dietary fat has a greater impact on the path of pathogenesis of cancer, more so than the**

total fat content in diets. Similarly human studies did not prove that a decrease in total fat intake is an effective strategy to combat cancer.

Saturated fat has, long been considered as harmful, but the current consensus is that **moderate intake of saturated fatty acids does not pose a health risk within a balanced diet.** So again, I don't need to sit here and read these quotes, but there is good data and it is the processing.

We know clearly trans fats and all of those processed fats and all of those processed oils. So processed oils, things like your canola. Things like soybean and safflower oil, which by the way, are in every packaged, processed food and condiment salad, dressings, notorious for canola oil. Those are all unhealthy oils.

Other risk factors

So people pick up your condiments, pick up your crackers and your chips, and take a look at the kind of fat that is in it because. Is increasing your risk of cancer. So that is just one thing, like I said, processed fats less so than the red meat intake, **sugar and refined carbohydrates.** Again, processing, processing, processing sugar, notorious for increasing our cancer rate, refined carbohydrates, anything that comes out of a package, anything that comes out of a box, your fast food, all of those things are refined carbohydrates.

alcohol

Alcohol. I know everyone's going to get on me for this one, but data indicates, especially for women, especially with breast cancer, more than three to four drinks a week, not a day, more

than three to four drinks a week have been linked to an increase and a significantly increased risk of cancer, especially breast cancer.

excess stress in your life.

We know we talk about this all the time. Don't just blow off stress. I mean, don't just blow it off as a risk factor. I want you to blow off stress. I just don't want you to blow it off as a risk factor. It's too often, we discredit the fact and the impact that stress has in our lives and on our lives. And I have seen it in the past couple years with this epidemic, with the pandemic.

The stress levels are through the roof. People we have got to learn how to moderate stress.

Staying up too late at night, past 10:00 PM. This is from research past 10:00 PM impacts our melatonin production. We know melatonin is our anti-aging rejuvenative hormone. And if we don't produce enough of it, it affects how our body recovers.

It affects our immune system. It can. Cancer sedentary lifestyle.

We know **being sedentary** has huge risk factors, not just for cancer, but for heart disease, diabetes, and every other metabolic disease on the planet **being overweight or obese**. So we know there was a recent study in the journal of molecular science, obesity as a consequence of over-nutrition, Exacerbates inflammation and is a known risk factor, not only for cancer, but for other metabolic diseases.

obesity

Let's define what obesity is. **Obesity is defined as being 30% more than your ideal body.** So for most people that somewhere between **20 to 35 pounds of additional fat**, I hate to say it, but I

think, and this is why the rates of obesity have just gone up more than not. Most people are walking around with way more than 20 or 30 excess pounds.

In some cases it's double or triple. And that is really a huge risk factor for so many other diseases.

Other risk factors - env

Smoking we know is a risk factor, **exposure to toxins**, including things like building supply, household cleaners. People, you need to look at what you are using to clean your house. I've talked about this before, but things like tide and **anything made with petroleum**, and I'm not singling out Tide as a detergent specifically, but I think that's everybody's favorite detergent.

It is and has the potential to be cancer-causing. And these things are cumulative, right?

Household cleaners are made with petroleum that is made with toxic chemicals. Can increase risk of cancer. So all of these things become **cumulative in the body**. It's not just one exposure. It's the cumulative exposure, personal care products, things like your lotions and your makeups.

Those make a difference. **EMS**, the electrical and wireless, devices emit frequency that has, and can interfere with our normal cells operating system. And so we know there's been increased incidences of brain cancers because of phone use, and then spending time with toxic people. I've talked about this before.

You want to make sure that you are surrounding yourself with people who bring out the best in you, who are kind, who are not causing you to be. To be stressed, and causing you to be

unhappy, we need to cut those people out of our lives. Be kind, be kind, be kind to yourself, be kind to others. So, so, so important.

Our own individual biochemistry

And you know, we can't forget that. We need to look at **our own individual biochemistry**. I talk about this again. I feel like I talk about it ad nauseum, but the best, the best prevention is knowing what is going on inside your body, knowing what your specific numbers look like.

Where are your nutritional deficiencies?

Because we know things like your vitamins, your minerals, antioxidants, antioxidants are your body. Best defense against cellular damage. And I'm not just talking about the vitamins, A and C and E. We talk about lipoic acid include thiamine and we can measure those things. And we know those things help support ourselves.

We know that looking at our genomics. So here's the thing. We can go back and look at these things like BRCA one and BRCA two, which are genetics. But now we can go back and look at. What is the connection between if you have these genes, these BRCA genes, right? And then we look at what is your body's own, then **genetic inclination towards inflammation**.

What is your genetic inclination towards having a reduced ability, to support your antioxidants?

What is your body's ability to process fats? We can look at all of this and **really change the trajectory of your health**. I think that that is so important to understand that genetics people oftentimes are afraid to know their genetics.

I hear this all day long. I don't want to know it's really genomics and it's a little different than genetics. If you **go back and listen to our previous podcast on that with Yael Joffe** it was, she

did an amazing job explaining that, but genomics gives. The ability to see the trajectory. So it's not diagnosing a disease and it's not predicting a disease.

It's saying if this is your, your trajectory or your, when I say trajectory, what is the likelihood, right. **If you're predisposed to cardiovascular disease or something of that nature, wouldn't you want to know so that you can prevent it?** That is the beauty. Now of course we can't guarantee a hundred percent prevention, but we can certainly offset those factors that we know will lead you in the direction of, of expressing that I talked about, Alzheimer's disease and memory issues and brain health, and we're getting off-topic, but I think it's important to know that don't you want to know what the risk is or if there is a risk.

Especially if there's a family history because then you can look at that risk and say, oh, these are the things I can now do in my lifestyle, in my diet with supplementation to offset that risk so that I don't suffer the same fate that some of my family members have suffered. I can tell you I've done my genetics.

I've talked about this, I've done my kid's genetics. **I think the best gift I ever gave to my son was letting him know that he is at risk for cardiovascular disease.** He is at risk for some of these issues, and he **now has the knowledge and therefore the power to change that.** And that to me is huge. So I will leave you with that.

And some of the things that we discussed today as always, I welcome your feedback. I welcome the questions. What do you want to hear more about, on any topic? And I just wish you all health and happiness make it a great day, everyone. This is your Rebel Nutritionist signing off.

