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Cancer Screening, Prevention and Treatments

Cancer has become a relative epidemic in our time. In cancer, cells that normally divide in limited numbers lose their control mechanisms and begin to divide rapidly with mutations, taking up space and altering the natural functioning of our organs. Over 38% of women and 44% of men will contract some form of cancer in their lifetime. This is a scary reality, but there is much to be done to prevent and treat cancer in our bodies. A key to working with cancer is understanding that cancer does not develop quickly, but rather that it is a disease process that evolves over time. Our immune system is responsible for recognizing invaders and removing cancerous or mutated cells. Proactive care and maintenance of our immune systems is key in preventing cancer. Other Naturopathic techniques for prevention include early detection through non invasive screening tests. Breast thermography is a technique commonly used to determine the health of breast tissue and the risk of cancer, and can detect tissue changes much earlier than conventional mammograms, without using radiation. Colon cancer can be screened for using digestive analyses that determine the pH and other important factors in the colon that are indicative of cancer, or a predestination towards it. Testing of saliva levels of hormones can help determine states contributing to hormone dependant cancers, and ratios of helpful or protective estrogens can be measured to inform patients who are at higher risk of cancer well in advance of conventional medical tests. These tools are invaluable to Naturopathic Medicine's preventative and proactive strategy and are not available through allopathic care. The earlier that one can be proactive against cancer, the better their chances of overcoming and avoiding it are.

In recent years, cancer patients have also begun to realize the benefits offered by Naturopathic Medicine as a means of alternative or supportive cancer treatment. According to current studies, 36 percent of adults with different stages of cancer use both complementary and alternative medicine. Naturopathic medicine can provide help by strengthening the body and controlling the side effects of conventional treatments, such as nausea, fatigue, loss of appetite and hair loss. Because of its gentle and noninvasive nature, Naturopathic medicine plays an important role in improving one's quality of life with cancer. The following are some examples of basic treatments that support our bodies and prevent cancer. Specific treatments are prescribed to individuals based on personal health assessments.

Diet- preventative anticancer diets are based on high quality proteins, fruits and vegetables, while cancer causing foods are eliminated. Examples of cancer causing foods include cured and smoked meats, high amounts of sugar and white flour products. Those with cancer would follow specific dietary recommendations to support their health.

Vitamins- due to the poorer quality of produce and proteins that we commonly ingest, our bodies require fresh vitamins on daily basis, and many more to fight cancer cells. Adding a high potency, high anti-oxidant vitamin to your diet may be a very good idea. Consult with your Naturopathic Doctor to find out which vitamin supplement is best for you- not all individuals can take all vitamin supplements, especially those with cancer. Helpful vitamins include A, C, E, and the minerals zinc & selenium, and Coenzyme Q10.

Herbs and homeopathy- herbs and homeopathy have both preventative and treatment roles in an anticancer protocol. Cancer medications are often based on herbal properties and actions, yet have added side effects. Naturopathic treatments are effective and safe.

Lifestyle- it is imperative to commit to a healthier lifestyle in order to fight off cancer itself or to prevent it. Begin by taking a one hour brisk walk three times a week and increase slowly to every day. Incorporate mind-body exercises such as yoga, Qi-gong, meditation, visualization, and deep breathing. Laugh and do something fun everyday, either by yourself or with those you love. Remember, a happy heart can bring about many fascinating health-altering events, including riding the body of cancer!

Patients who use Naturopathic medicine for cancer prevention and support experience an increased sense of control over their health and future, and improved quality of life. If you are ready to be proactive about preventing or treating cancer, be sure to enlist in the professional advice and guidance of a licensed Naturopathic Doctor before beginning any alternate methods of treatment.