Oranges and Bananas May Reduce Childhood Leukemia Risk

Little has been known about diet’s influence on childhood leukemia, but a new study shows that certain fruits may reduce risk of the disease. Researchers at the University of California–Berkeley reviewed the diets of 328 children with leukemia and 328 matched controls. After adjusting for various lifestyle and dietary factors, the researchers found that the consumption of oranges, bananas, or orange juice at least four to six days per week during the first two years of life was associated with a significantly reduced risk of leukemia for 2- through 14-year-olds. Oranges are packed with vitamin C, a powerful antioxidant that may prevent oxidative damage to DNA and the initiation of carcinogenesis. Bananas and oranges are also rich in potassium, which epidemiologists believe may have anticarcinogenic properties. Vitamin C has also been shown to increase intracellular potassium intake.


Avocados Fight Prostate Cancer

In a new test-tube study, avocado extract inhibited prostate cancer cell growth by up to 60 percent. Researchers at the University of California–Los Angeles compared the effects of whole avocado extract with those of lutein, one of the carotenoids found in avocados, to see if avocado’s benefits were simply due to lutein. While whole avocado had a significant effect, lutein alone had virtually none. It is not yet clear whether avocado’s apparent effects are due to monounsaturated fat, vitamin E, or other nutrients working alone or in combination.


Animal Products Increase Ovarian Cancer Risk

Consumption of animal products was associated with a significant increase in ovarian cancer risk in a new Canadian study of more than 2,500 women. The researchers found that women with the highest intake of cholesterol (found only in animal products) had a 40 percent higher risk of ovarian cancer than women with the lowest cholesterol consumption. They also found that women with the highest egg consumption had a 30 percent increased risk of the disease. In contrast, women with the highest total vegetable and cruciferous vegetable intake lowered their ovarian cancer risk by nearly 25 percent.


The Cancer Project is a nonprofit PCRM affiliate organization that advances cancer prevention and survival through nutrition education and research. Begun as a PCRM program in 1991, The Cancer Project became an incorporated affiliate in 2004.