

# Case Studies

## Overcoming Breast Cancer Through Macrobiotics

by Meg Wolff

Five years ago this spring, when I was 40 years old I discovered a lump in my right breast which was later diagnosed as invasive lobular and ductal carcinoma stage 3B. I was devastated as I had already had bone cancer seven years earlier and had lost my left leg. At the time my new oncologist was recommending a stem cell transplant, which I later declined after second and third opinions.

I had a right mastectomy and five lymph nodes showed positive; in one node the cancer had spread beyond the node. I was thinking about having another breast removed after the treatment (chemo and radiation), but the specialist in Boston told me (with a long, sad face) that the cancer would probably return within a year. Tamoxifen was recommended which I tried for one month, but decided to discontinue because of the side-effects.

About a month after the surgery, I asked my surgeon if she knew any MDs that practised conventional/alternative medicine. She gave me the name of a Naturopathic doctor – Dr Devna Krassner. She told me “some women with breast cancer have been helped by the macrobiotic diet”. I thought ahhh and remembered reading a book (15 years earlier) about a man who cured his cancer using the macrobiotic diet. Thus my healing journey began.

I found a macrobiotics/whole foods cooking teacher in my area, Lisa Silverman, and began her classes which I continued for the next year and a half. Someone I met referred me to a woman who had cured her breast cancer through a macrobiotic diet without chemotherapy. This woman had gone to Dr Christianne Northrup who told her, “You can cure your cancer through the macrobiotic diet and you also need to cure your anger”. She did both, and stayed with the macrobiotics for 12 years. She told me that I could do it, too! I was empowered.

About nine months after I started eating this way, I met another woman at my cooking class. She appeared to be in her 60s with long shiny brown hair, which she tossed over her shoulder. As she smiled, her face lit up and I heard her say, “I feel so good since I’ve been on this heal-

ing diet”. I introduced myself to her and found out that she met with a macrobiotic counsellor from Boston, Warren Kramer. Warren had helped adjust the diet for her condition, which had also been breast cancer. (The woman, Louise Sharp, now assists me in teaching cooking classes.)

So I began to meet with Warren every two to four months, and continued to do so for the next two years. Many things started to improve in my life, including my health. I began sleeping through the night – a problem I had been having for five years. I had also been taking medication for a heart arrhythmia which I eventually weaned myself off with the okay of my doctor. I lost weight, my skin got very clear, and the sinus problem and headaches I had lived with for years finally cleared up. My thinking became sharper and my memory improved. I had been plagued with ulcerative colitis for four years, and that cleared up completely. It seemed like every few months I’d report to my friends new good changes to my health.

I felt alive and many friends and a few strangers remarked that I was starting to ‘glow’. I began reading and studying every book about macrobiotics I could find. I learned about the Kushi Institute, a non-profit educational organization, where I later went to study macrobiotics. I attended my first Kushi Institute Macrobiotic Conference, which is held every summer. While studying at the Kushi Institute I sat in on a Way to Health Program, a weeklong programme of intensive study to learn cooking theory for people with illnesses. The programme was very inspiring to me.

Through studying the macrobiotic approach to cancer, I was able to understand the causes of illness. Best of all, I could take responsibility for my health and change my condition. I was able to let go of fear. I went from terminal illness to vibrant health. As my health bloomed, I also saw many positive changes in my family’s health as they gradually embraced this way of eating. This also extended out to my sister and her family who started eating this way. Her small son was cured of reflux, which he had



Meg Wolff

since birth. He husband’s cholesterol went down to normal and they both lost weight. My life is by no means perfect. I still have my ups and downs, and I still deal with issues surrounding my grief, anger, loss, etc. But the fact is that I’m still alive to deal with my issues, and I even get to have some fun in between!

### References

- Fat and cooked red meats increase the risk of breast cancer. *Journal of the National Cancer Institute*. 2003.
- Women with breast cancer survive longer when they drastically reduce or eliminate red meat and increase vegetable intake. *Breast Cancer Treatment*. 1998.
- Overweight dramatically increases the risk of most common cancers including breast, prostate, and uterus. *New England Journal of Medicine*. April. 2003.
- Women with breast cancer that reduce calorie intake especially from fat live longer. *Breast Cancer Treatment*. Feb. 1999.
- An isoflavone called genistein found in soybeans or soybean products, such as miso, shoyu and tamari blocks blood vessels from growing to tumours. *Cancer Investigations*. 2003.
- The National Cancer Institute’s Committee for Alternative and Complementary Medicine voted unanimously 25 February 2002 to fund research on the Macrobiotic diet as a therapeutic approach to cancer after hearing dramatic testimony and meticulously documented case histories of people who used Macrobiotics to overcome their advanced cancers.

### About the Author

Meg Wolff is currently in vibrant health and has completed Levels 1, 2, & 3 course in Macrobiotic Education at the Kushi Institute in Becket, Massachusetts, USA. She is currently studying level 4 with Michio Kushi. Meg may be reached at Tel: 001 207-799-0163; meg@macrobreastcancersurvivors.com  
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### Further Information

Whole Foods Cooking Series With Meg Wolff is at the Cancer Community Center, Portland, ME Tel: 001 207-774-2200 Toll Free (US) 1-877-774-2200. A schedule of Meg’s classes at the Cancer Community Center can be obtained by calling Tel: 001-877-774-2200; www.cancercommunitycenter.org For information on the Kushi Institute ‘Way to Health Program’ in Becket, Massachusetts, Tel: 001-413-623-5741; www.kushiinstitute.org

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