

Moore's UCSD Cancer Center Study: Decrease in Progression of Prostate Cancer With Plant-based Diet and Stress Reduction

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One out of six American men will develop prostate cancer at some point in their life, and more than a third of them will experience a recurrence after undergoing treatment, putting them at high risk to die of the disease. New research from the Moore's Cancer Center and School of Medicine at University of California, San Diego suggests that diet changes, reinforced by stress management training, may be effective in slowing or halting the spread of this deadly cancer.

The 6-month study, published in the September issue of *Integrative Cancer Therapies*, focused on the change in the levels of prostate-specific antigen (PSA), an indicator of the cancer, in response to a plant-based diet and stress reduction. Patients were taught to increase consumption of plant-based foods such as whole grains, cruciferous and leafy green vegetables, beans and legumes, and fruit, and to decrease the intake of meat, dairy products and refined carbohydrates. They were also provided with stress management training, which included meditation, yoga and t'ai chi exercises.

The plant-based diet and stress reduction intervention was effective in significantly reducing the PSA rate, indicating a reduction in the rate of progression of the prostate cancer. Ten patients with recurrent, invasive prostate cancer completed the pilot clinical trial. Rates of PSA rise were determined for each patient from the time of disease recurrence following treatment up to the start of the study (pre-study), and from the time immediately preceding the study intervention to the end of the intervention (0-6 months).

By the end of the intervention, four of 10 patients experienced an absolute reduction in their PSA levels, and nine of 10 experienced a decrease in the rate of further PSA rise. The median time it took for the men's PSA levels to double increased from 11.9 months at pre-study to 112.3 months (intervention).

"The magnitude of effect of these findings is the strongest observed to date among dietary and nutritional interventions in this patient population," said Cancer Center member Gordon Saxe, M.D., Ph.D., assistant professor of family and preventive medicine at UCSD School of Medicine. "These results provide preliminary evidence that adoption of a plant-based diet, in combination with stress reduction, may slow, stop, or perhaps even reverse disease progression and have therapeutic potential for management of recurrent prostate cancer. Further research is needed to validate these findings and establish the long-term effectiveness of this intervention."

Co-authors on the paper are Jacqueline M. Major, M.S., Jacquelyn Y. Nguyen, M.D., Karen M. Freeman, MPH, Tracy M. Downs, M.D., and Carol E. Salem, M.D. The study was supported by grants from the American Cancer Society and the National Institutes of Health.

The article "Potential Attenuation of Disease Progression in Recurrent Prostate Cancer Progression With Plant-based Diet and Stress Reduction" can be accessed at no-charge for a limited time on the SAGE Publications' Integrative Cancer Therapies web site.

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