

THE **Sunday Telegraph**

body
+
soul

health

- 2 the body guard
- 4 get on the gland wagon
- 6 changing your mind
- 8 walk small
- 10 start ache
- 12 wild things
- 14 molly dye
- 16 great expectations
- 18 am I fit yet?

regulars

- 5 beauty flash
- 6 nature's way
- 8 dream coach
- 10 feng shui
- 13 personal trainer
- 14 wine list
- 17 star bodies
- 19 inside out
- 21 your stars
- 24 ask the icon

men only

- 20 steak out
- 22 men.com

EDITOR

Sheryn George

SENIOR DESIGNERS

Melinda Pearson, Christine Schiedel

SUB-EDITORS

Milisa Dritz, Michael Dubois, Kelly Baker, Gavin Hammond

DESIGNER

Gail Adam

SENIOR WRITER

Bronwen Gora

PRODUCTION EDITOR

Jason Gardner

ADVERTISING MANAGER

Fiona Cairncross (02) 9288 3934

COVER IMAGE

Austral

email the body+soul team at body+soul@news10.com.au

the body guard

One third of men and a quarter of women will be affected by cancer before they turn 75. But cancer can be held at bay – simply by changing the way you eat and exercise. **Bronwen Gora** reports.

Nancy Schmidt had no idea her diet could have been a killer. She ate meat most nights – steak or schnitzel – and a few vegetables with rice. “But we also ate many things that weren’t so healthy,” Schmidt recalls.

Her continental background meant foods such as rich cheeses, cured meats, coffee and cakes were also diet staples. But when Schmidt was diagnosed with ovarian cancer, everything changed.

“We eat more raw food now and I avoid deep-frying,” Schmidt says. “And we have a lot of tofu and soya products. I don’t drink coffee or eat white bread, white flour or sugar, and I get plenty of sleep.”

Schmidt, whose cancer has not returned in five years, learned how dangerous her diet was when she began reading books on food and its relationship to cancer.

Her diet, she discovered, was a textbook example of one that could lead to the disease. Good food and exercise, she says, has put her on the road to recovery.

“Everything we eat now is different,” Schmidt says. “Your body’s like an engine and runs only as well as what you put in it.”

If you think cancer is only caused by cigarettes and bad luck, think again. Up to 40 per cent of cancers are directly linked to bad diet and a lack of exercise – a finding made by 16 international scientists from a World Cancer Research Fund (WCRF) report into food and cancer. According to the NSW Cancer Council, about 6000 cancer deaths in Australia are a result of not eating enough fruit and vegies, not exercising enough and/or being overweight.

“Studies show that low vegetable intake – less than four serves a day – accounts for 17 per cent of bowel cancer risk and nine per cent of lung and prostate cancer risk in Australia,” says Dr Andrew Penman, CEO of The Cancer Council NSW.

but it's not all bad news

Overwhelming evidence shows that even moderate increases in fruit and vegetable intake and exercise will dramatically reduce cancer risks.

The NSW Cancer Council says at least 30 per cent of cancer-related deaths can be prevented by a better diet – especially colon cancer. Nutritionist Sue Radd says it is forecast to overtake heart disease as the biggest killer in Australia. “The irony is that colon cancer is one of the most easily preventable by diet and lifestyle,” Radd says. “People just have to change.”

So how much to eat? The official line is that you need to eat five serves of vegies a day and two serves of fruit to lower your cancer risk. A serve is a medium-sized piece of fruit, half a cup of cooked vegetables or a cup of salad. Less than four serves a day of vegetables and your risk of bowel, breast, lung and prostate cancer, in particular, increase.

food fighters

■ Citrus fruits, in particular oranges, and kwi fruits, all other fruits, vegetables, especially garlic, cabbage, onions, carrots, cooked tomatoes, soy beans, all green leafy and yellow vegetables, fatty fish, tea.

■ **Foods said to promote cancer include:** High-fat foods, excessive alcohol, excessive meat consumption, vegetable oils such as corn oil.

■ **Cancer warriors – food that may stop cancer spreading:** Fish and all other seafood, garlic, cruciferous vegetables such as cabbage, brussel sprouts and broccoli and cauliflower.



Don’t be surprised if you fall into this category: the latest National Nutrition Survey found that most of us should double our intake of vegetables and fruit. Fortunately, that is easy.

One apple a day and maybe an orange will fulfil the fruit quota, and if you can fit a bowl of vegetables and salad into your daily diet you’re also doing well.

Radd says don’t ignore legumes either: chickpeas, lentils, and all kinds of beans – and cereals, breads and pastas made from wholegrains. These will lower your risk of stomach and colon cancer.

“If you look at the recommendations from cancer societies around the world, they all are saying people should eat more plant foods,” Radd says. “Way more than they’re currently eating.”

move it or lose it

While diet is only one aspect of preventing and beating cancer, Radd says it’s one of the biggest factors under your control. You can’t help breathing in car fumes or inheriting your parent’s genes, but you can choose a salad sandwich over chips and soft drink for lunch.

And also under your control is getting physical. The UK-based WCRF says you should do something physical for at least an hour a day. “This is interesting,” Radd says, “because the recommendations in the past to reduce the risks of cardiovascular disease have been to exercise for 30 minutes every second day. But when you look at cancer risk reduction it’s now one hour per day.”

But don’t panic. “This doesn’t mean 60 minutes on the treadmill,” Radd says. “They mean simply being active, so movement at any time of the day adds up and counts. It just means we need to move more than most people are doing.”

The latest findings from Harvard University found that just 30 additional minutes of activity per week will reduce your risk of colon cancer by 10 per cent.

what to avoid

Eating meat more than 10 times a week can put you in the danger zone for colon cancer, says a study by associate professor Dallas English from Victoria’s Cancer Council. Even eating meat seven times a week increases your risk by 150 per cent.

Eating processed meat, such as salami and ham, more than five times a week also boosts your cancer risk.

The official guidelines, Radd says, are to eat meat three to four times a week, and no more than 80g at a time.

When it comes to alcohol, men should consume no more than four drinks a day, and women two, as alcohol increases the risk of many cancers, particularly those of the upper digestive tract, liver and breast.

The Australian barbecue can also be doing us harm: cooking meat in open flames sends cancer-causing carcinogens skyrocketing. “The barbie isn’t a recipe for health,” Radd says. Grill on a hoptele instead, and marinate the meat first.

Putting on weight is another no-no. “If you’re an adult you shouldn’t gain more than 5kg if you want to minimise your risk of cancer,” Radd says.

So is leading an anti-cancer lifestyle easy? “Absolutely,” Radd says. “But for some people it’ll mean drastic changes.”



“ Overwhelming evidence shows that even moderate increases in fruit and vegetable intake and exercise will dramatically reduce cancer risks ”