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## Meat and Fat Intake Increase Risk of Pancreatic Cancer

A new study shows that meat consumption increases the risk of pancreatic cancer, one of the most serious forms of the disease. Researchers with the Multiethnic Cohort Study in Hawaii and Los Angeles followed 190,545 participants for seven years, finding that those who regularly consumed red meat (beef, pork, lamb) showed a 50 percent increase in cancer risk; and those who consumed the most processed meat (sausage, salami, bologna) showed a 70 percent increase in risk. The researchers speculate that carcinogens formed during the preparation of the beef, pork, and lamb products may be to blame.

Nöthlings U, Wilkens LR, Murphy SP, Hankin JH, Henderson BE, Kolonel LN. Meat and fat intake as risk factors for pancreatic cancer: the multiethnic cohort study. *J Natl Cancer Inst.* 2005;97:1458-65.

## Phytoestrogens May Reduce Risk of Lung Cancer

A new study at the University of Texas M.D. Anderson Cancer Center shows that natural compounds in beans and vegetables may reduce the risk of lung cancer. Phytoestrogens (*phyto* means plant) are structurally similar to estrogen hormones, but are much weaker. They occur naturally in many plants and, because they compete with the body's natural estrogens to attach to estrogen receptors, they tend to reduce estrogen's effects, thus reducing cancer risk. Researchers compared 1,674 lung cancer patients with 1,735 healthy individuals and concluded that those who consumed the most phytoestrogens had a 46 percent less chance of

getting lung cancer. Previous studies have shown that phytoestrogens may also reduce the risk of cancers of the breast, uterus, and prostate.

Schabath MB, Hernandez LM, Wu X, Pillow PC, Spitz MR. Dietary phytoestrogens and lung cancer risk. *JAMA.* 2005;294:1493-1504.

## Flaxseed Can Help Fight Breast Cancer

Flaxseed may slow breast cancer, according to a recent study at the University Health Network in Toronto. In addition to their regular diet, 32 postmenopausal women with breast cancer were asked to have a flaxseed muffin or a muffin with similar nutrient content but without flaxseed. Women in the flaxseed group showed a 34.2 percent reduction in tumor cell growth and a 71 percent decrease in expression of an aggressive type of cancer cell known as C-erbB2.

Thompson LU, Chen JM, Li T, Strasser-Weippl K, Goss PE. Dietary flaxseed alters tumor biological markers in postmenopausal breast cancer. *Clin Cancer Res.* 2005;11(10):3828-35.

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