



KEEP YOUR BREASTS HEALTHY

with Four Natural Breast Protectors

by Jan McBarron, MD, ND

Your breasts change throughout your life—and some of those changes can trigger fear and worry about breast cancer. But while breast cancer gets the most attention, other conditions can affect your breast health and comfort.

Millions of women seek medical consults due to lumpy or tender breasts each year. And while lumps can be very frightening, many turn out to be cysts or fibroids—both of which are non-cancerous and don't lead to breast cancer. For many women, those issues come and go with their menstrual cycles, flaring up with hormone surges and then calming down.

THE ESTROGEN EQUATION

Estrogen plays a key role in a woman's reproductive development and other crucial functions, like encouraging the growth of milk ducts in your breast

tissue and increasing fertility. This hormone is produced by the ovaries during the first part of the menstrual cycle, increasing until ovulation. After that, another hormone called progesterone takes over to complete the cycle.

Good breast health depends on proper hormonal balance, especially between estrogen and progesterone. Unfortunately, many women struggle with estrogen dominance, which means their estrogen levels are too high relative to progesterone levels.

Many factors can contribute to estrogen dominance, including:

- Perimenopause
- Environmental factors
- Chronic stress overload
- Excess body fat
- Diet rich in refined carbohydrates and low in fiber, healthy fats, and essential nutrients

Along with many other symptoms, estrogen dominance can cause breast pain, tenderness, and swelling. This imbalance can also increase your risk for fibroids, cysts, and breast cancer. Luckily, there are several safe, natural ways to gently reduce estrogen output and get your hormones back in healthy balance.

NUTRIENT-RICH FOODS SUPPORT BETTER BREAST HEALTH

When it comes to healthy breasts, what you don't eat is as important as what you do eat. Diets high in refined sugars and unhealthy fats can increase your risk of breast cancer. On the other hand, foods rich in specific nutrients, antioxidants, and omega-3 fatty acids can reduce those risks and improve your overall health.

A healthy breast diet includes foods such as:



FOUR NATURAL BREAST PROTECTORS

In addition to sticking with a breast-healthy diet, four natural supplements can help protect your breasts and reduce uncomfortable breast symptoms.

CURCUMIN

Curcumin, a powerful compound found in turmeric, can be a strong ally in the fight against breast cancer. Dozens of studies have demonstrated the many paths curcumin can take to disarm and destroy breast cancer cells, including blocking communication between cancer cells to disrupt their spread. Curcumin has also been found to significantly reduce breast pain. There's a catch, though. Curcumin can be difficult for the body to absorb and utilize. To reap all of the breast benefits of curcumin, look for a supplement that contains a highly bioavailable form such as BCM-95.

GRAPE SEED EXTRACT (OPCs)

Oligomeric proanthocyanidin complexes (OPCs) from grape seed extract help protect breast cells from DNA damage. OPCs have extreme antioxidant powers that can tame free radicals. OPCs also inhibit aromatase activity, which helps reduce the risk of estrogen-related breast issues. These actions help OPCs stop both hormone-driven and triple-negative breast cancer cells. But OPCs can only protect your breasts if your body can absorb them. That's why

it's critical to make sure you use *small particle* OPCs. Look for tannin-free VX1 French grape seed extract for fully bioavailable OPCs.



POMEGRANATE SEED OIL

Pomegranates are widely known for their supercharged antioxidant powers, but often the seeds themselves get overlooked. That's a mistake, because pomegranate seeds contain a special omega-5 fatty acid called punicic acid that inhibits aromatase. Reducing aromatase reduces excess estrogen, a key driver in breast health problems from fibroids to hormone-fueled cancer.



HEALTHY WEIGHT, HEALTHY BREASTS

Being overweight can increase your risk of breast cancer and other breast issues. Here's why: Fatty tissue increases estrogen production, and that can encourage hormone-fueled cancer cells to grow and thrive. Studies show that women who are overweight or obese are more likely to get breast cancer, experience breast cancer recurrence, and die from breast cancer.

VITAMIN D3

You need plenty of vitamin D3, the active form of vitamin D, to stay healthy overall. And when it comes to your breasts, this essential nutrient holds the key to optimal health. Vitamin D3 plays a part in critical cellular activities, including cell division, normal growth, and programmed death. Without it, your cells can't function properly, and that can increase the risk of breast cancer and other breast issues. Clinical trials show that:

- Women with the highest blood levels of vitamin D have a better chance of surviving breast cancer
- Women with the lowest vitamin D status face a 42 percent higher risk of dying from breast cancer
- Every 5ng/ml (how vitamin D levels are measured) increase in vitamin D levels leads to a 13 percent reduced risk of breast cancer recurrence
- Women with lower levels of vitamin D are substantially more likely to suffer from breast pain

Boosting vitamin D levels through supplementation can be a game changer for improving breast health. How much do you need? Studies suggest that supplementing with 1,500-2,000 IU of vitamin D3 daily can help you maintain a higher blood level of vitamin D. ■



Jan McBarron, MD, ND, advocates a comprehensive approach to health that encompasses both traditional medicine, including prescribing drugs and surgery, and naturopathy. She enjoyed over 30 years in

private practice while cohosting the nationally syndicated health talk radio broadcast *Duke & The Doctor*. Dr. McBarron is also an author, philanthropist, educator, and the recipient of multiple awards.