

Gently Narrow Your "Estrogen Window" With Lignan's

Although many people think that breast cancer is a genetically transferred disease, the truth is that it is rarely genetically transferred, as only one in every ten cases are linked to genes for this cancer. Strong evidence points to environmental causes being the main reason for breast cancer. By avoiding synthetic chemicals that mimic estrogens, a substantial fraction of these cancers can be prevented. These synthetic chemicals are called xenoestrogens. These xenoestrogens are manmade chemicals that either imitate or enhance the effects of estrogens in the body's cells and tell these cells to grow.

During puberty, this growth message is important to a woman's body and during pregnancy and the preparation for that. At this time period, estrogens are in full force, but if estrogen stimulation is increased by chemicals, cell growth is increased even more. Uncontrolled cell growth provides the foundation for cancer. As cells rapidly multiply, which is what happens when exposed to estrogens, the chance of DNA mutation is enhanced, which causes the creation of cancerous cells. A lot of women today also deal with increased estrogen stimulation over their lifetimes due to an early onset of menstruation, late menopause, and less time spent breastfeeding. The use of estrogen-containing oral contraceptives and post-menopausal hormone replacement also add to the estrogen burden, along with obesity and being overweight.

Estrogens affect cells by binding to receptor sites. However, there are tools that help to reduce the impact of areas that have a lot of receptor sites, such as the breasts. One of the main tools is lignans, which are a group of naturally occurring plant chemicals that are found in flaxseeds. Interest in lignans began with observational studies, which found a link between high intake and reduced risk of breast and colon cancers. Studies have reinforced those results, finding that lignans inhibit the growth of breast and colon cancer and also reduce the spread of skin cancer. The real benefit of lignans starts when they reach your intestines, where friendly bacteria convert them into phytoestrogens.

Phytoestrogens are a gentler estrogen, which bind to the same receptors that other estrogens bind, but don't have the growth-accelerating effects. While they are occupying these receptors, the less kind and gentle estrogens are unable to bind to them, resulting in both an estrogenic and estrogen-blocking effect. This explains why lignans are effective both for fighting against breast cancer and reducing the effect of hot flashes other symptoms during menopause. When estrogens are low, lignans act as weak estrogens, but when they are high, lignans act as estrogen blockers.

The risk for breast cancer is strongly affected by a woman's "estrogen window", or overall estrogen exposure that has been experienced over her reproductive years. The early onset of menstruation, no pregnancies, being pregnant after age 30, limited or no breastfeeding, short menstrual cycles, and late menopause all expand the estrogen window, increasing lifetime estrogen exposure along with the risk for breast cancer. By adding lignans to the diet, women can reduce the size of the estrogen window, and therefore, block the excess estrogen stimulation in estrogen-sensitive tissues like the breasts. Additionally, lignans are also believed to reduce the risk of colon and prostate cancers. When they are delivered along with omega-3-rich flaxseed oil, they promote better cholesterol balance, heart health, joint health, better bone density, greater endurance, better blood sugar balance, and healthy skin, hair, and nails.

About the Author

More information on lignan's and [lignan extracts](#) is available at VitaNet ®, LLC Health Food Store. <http://vitanetonline.com/>

Source: <http://www.spivo.com>