



PATHWAYS

A Study of Breast Cancer Survivorship

A NEWSLETTER FOR STUDY PARTICIPANTS

Spring/Summer 2012

From the Principal Investigator's Corner

By Larry Kushi



Dear Study Participants,

Earlier this year, we passed a significant milestone in our study, enrolling our 4,000th participant. As of May 31st, we now have 4,170 women enrolled in the study. This study is now one of the largest studies designed specifically to look at the lifestyle choices of women with breast cancer—what you eat, what you do for activity, whether you use supplements or complementary and alternative therapies. We are very appreciative that most of you continue to participate with us as we collect information about your lifestyle choices over the months and years after your breast cancer diagnosis. It is only through this continued data collection that we can truly examine how your choices influence the course of your experience after breast cancer.



As you may know, there continues to be great interest in the role that food choices and physical activity patterns have on development and prognosis of cancer. Earlier this year, the American Cancer Society updated their nutrition and physical activity guidelines for the prevention of cancer; the full

article is available online at <http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.3322/caac.20140/pdf>.

Along with Colleen Doyle of the American Cancer Society, I chaired the committee that reviewed the literature and updated the guidelines, which were previously published in 2006.

The American Cancer Society emphasizes the following four major recommendations for prevention of cancer:

1) maintaining a healthful weight throughout life; 2) adopting a physically active lifestyle; 3) choosing a healthful diet that emphasizes plant foods; and 4) limiting alcohol intake. The evidence supporting these recommendations is strong, powerful and consistent. Men and women who are overweight or obese have a higher chance of developing cancer overall, and in particular of cancers of the large bowel, prostate, uterus, breast (after menopause), and many other cancers. The only major exceptions are those that are caused by cigarette smoking, such as lung cancer. It is clear that regular physical activity lowers the chance of developing cancers of the breast, large bowel (colon and rectum) and uterus (endometrium), and growing evidence that it is important in prevention of advanced prostate cancer and other cancers. It is now widely accepted that eating red meat and processed meat results in greater risk of colorectal cancer, and perhaps also other cancers, and eating fruits, vegetables, and dietary fiber likely lowers risk. And finally, alcohol intake increases risk of not just cancers of the digestive system including liver cancer, but also breast cancer.

In addition to being physically active, these new guidelines also emphasize the importance of not being sedentary—that is, decreasing your “sitting time”. There is growing evidence that increased sitting time—whether or not you are physically active—will increase the chances of developing cancer and other chronic diseases such as diabetes or cardiovascular disease.

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From the Principal Investigator's Corner *continued*:

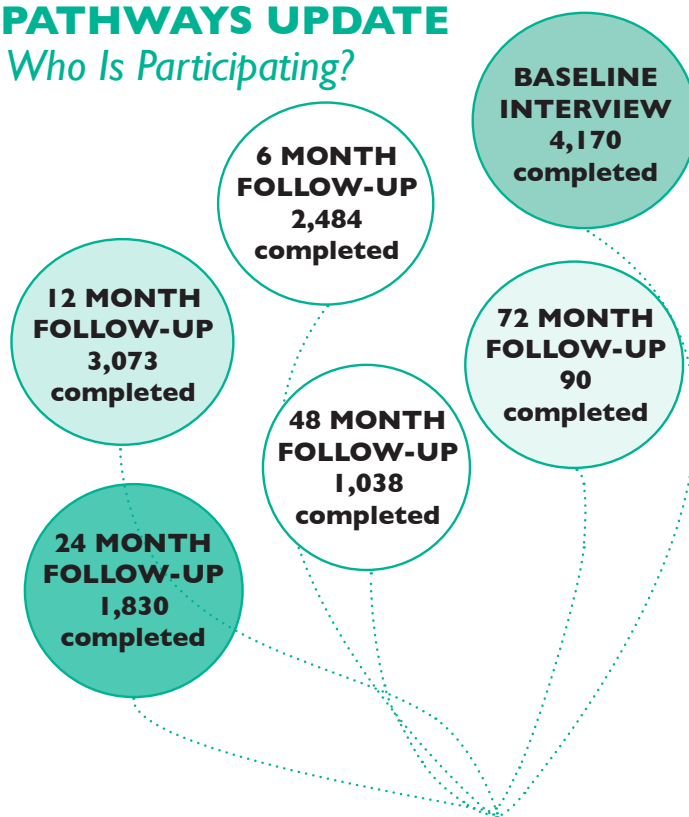
Does following these recommendations make a difference? In 2011, in a study that I worked on with colleagues at the American Cancer Society, we examined whether men and women who reported food intake patterns that were similar to these recommendations had lower mortality rates than people who did not follow these patterns. We found that indeed, following these guidelines resulted in lower chance of death from all causes, and from cancer or cardiovascular diseases, over a 14-year time period. The study involved about 110,000 men and women who reported their food and physical activity habits in 1992-1993, and were followed through 2006. This paper is available at <http://cebp.aacrjournals.org/content/20/6/1089.full.pdf+html>.

There is much less information about whether what you eat or how active you are changes the course of cancer after diagnosis. Even so, the American Cancer Society has also published guidelines in this area, as there are more studies in this area being published; I was also on this committee. The ACS publication is available here: <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/14570227>. The overall recommendations are generally similar to those for cancer prevention, emphasizing a healthful weight and physical activity, although because of cancer being present, there may be special considerations, especially during and after active cancer treatment.

There is less evidence on how specific food groups influence what happens after cancer, but studies suggest plant-based diets may be most healthful too. And that is where the Pathways Study comes in. As one of the largest such studies, in the coming years, we are well-positioned to contribute knowledge to this important area. However, it is only because of your willingness to participate with us as we gain this knowledge. We have undertaken this study to improve the lives of women with breast cancer, and we are grateful for your ongoing participation to make this goal happen. I hope you look forward to hearing from us as much as we appreciate your responses to our questionnaires. Be well, and thank you again for supporting the Pathways Study! ❀

PATHWAYS UPDATE

Who Is Participating?



We are grateful for your role in Pathways. All of you add meaning and diversity to our team, and contribute your unique perspective to the information we are gathering. Thank you for participating! ❀

72-Month (6-Year) Follow-up Has Been Launched!

We are excited to let you know that we have launched the 72-month (6-year) follow-up so we can continue collecting information about your lifestyle. Some of the questions will already be familiar to you, such as questions on diet, multivitamin use, physical activity, social measures, and body size measurement. Other questions are new, and designed to learn more about your religion, spirituality, and neighborhood environment.

There are different ways you can get involved with the 72-month follow-up. You can participate through our mailed questionnaires, over the phone, or through the web. When you reach the 72-month time-point, we will mail you a packet of questionnaires. The packet will also contain information on how you can log-in to the web survey or call for a phone interview.

Of course, the Pathways interviewer in your area and the office staff are here to help you. If you have any questions or comments, please feel free to call our toll free number, 1-866-206-2979. We are here to assist you in any way possible. Thank you in advance for your participation! ❀

Pathways Babies



Brian

Brian is six months old. His mom, Veronica Ting-Zhou, was a field interviewer for the Pathways Study and is now working for the SWAN and RPGEH studies.



Carmelita

Carmelita is one year old. Her mom, Paula Partee, was both a field interviewer and office staff for the Pathways Study. She is now working with the APPLES Study.



Grandchildren of Judy Jensen

These adorable children are now in high school and the Oakland School for the Arts. Their grandmother, Judy Jensen, is a field interviewer for the Pathways Study.

Pathways Collaborators

Jamie Wright

Jamie is currently working on his doctoral dissertation, which explores how women with breast cancer utilize cultural and religious resources to understand, engage, and cope with the illness. He is grateful that the Pathways researchers and staff have been helpful and encouraging since the beginning of this project. He looks forward to potentially interviewing and getting to know some of the Pathways participants as part of his research. He enjoys spending any free time he has with family and friends.



Janice Barlow

Janice Barlow, Executive Director of Zero Breast Cancer, has been involved in the Pathways Study since its beginning in 2006. She is responsible for bringing a community/patient perspective into the research and for communicating findings to those most likely to benefit from the information. She is very honored to be part of this study, since the findings are important to breast cancer survivors who want to know what they can do to decrease their risk for recurrence and increase their quality of life. She hopes that the findings from the study will help guide personal and medical decision making, reduce breast cancer risk, prevent disease and advance the overall health of women globally. ✦



New Contact Information?

In order to keep in touch with you, we need your latest contact information. Please let us know if your phone number or home address has changed.

You can reach us by calling our toll-free number:

1-866-206-2979. ✦





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