

Healing After Breast Cancer Treatment

Table 4: Natural Therapeutic Interventions and Prevention of Recurrence of Breast Cancer

<p>Vitamin supplements taken the first six months after treatment resulted in lower recurrence and 18% reduced risk of mortality. The authors stated: "Our results do not support the current recommendation that breast cancer patients should avoid use of vitamin supplements."¹</p>	<p>Breast cancer survivors with serum vitamin D concentrations at 55 nmol/L had a 1.55 times longer disease-free survival than those with 35 nm/L concentration.² However, this was not seen in the WHEL trial where no relation between vitamin D and breast cancer recurrence was found.³</p>
<p>There is a (nonsignificant) lower risk of recurrence and disease-related mortality among those who self-reported using vitamins C and E for three years posttreatment (vitamin E nearly halved the risk.)⁴</p>	<p>Increased green tea consumption (more than three cups a day) was inversely associated with breast cancer recurrence (pooled RR = 0.73, 95% CI: 0.56–0.96) in a meta-analysis of 5716 cases.⁵</p>
<p>Black cohosh lengthened disease-free survival among 18,861 patients observed for 3.6 years. After 2 years following initial diagnosis, 14% of the control group had developed a recurrence, while the black cohosh extract group didn't reach this proportion until after 6.5 years.⁶ However, black cohosh was found to increase the risk of lung metastasis in HER2-expressing transgenic mice. Caution in HER2+ patients is advised.⁷</p>	<p>A pilot study evaluated the survival of patients with various types of end-stage cancer including breast. 76% of those who received supplements of coenzyme Q10 and a mixture of other antioxidants (e.g., vitamin C, selenium, folic acid and beta-carotene) survived longer than predicted among the treatment group; on average, surviving 5 more months than the control group.⁸</p>
<p>The disease-free survival was increased from 84% to 100% when PSK (extract from <i>Coriolus versicolor</i>) was added to biannual chemotherapy × 5 years. They studied 134 randomly selected breast cancer survivors who were HLAB40+. The benefit was not apparent among those whose tumors were HLAB40–.⁹</p>	<p>Daily administration of melatonin significantly increased the survival time of tumor-bearing animals. This is only recommended for those with ER+ tumor history.¹⁰</p>

From these studies, I might recommend that a posttreatment patient with ER+ breast cancer consider:

- whole-foods multivitamin/mineral complex without iron (such as Innate's Iron-free one daily)
- selenium, 400 mcg from food (100 mcg per Brazil nut) and supplementation combined
- vitamin D3 to achieve serum concentration of 50–60 ng/mL
- green tea at 5+ cups a day or the equivalent in capsules (two 300 mg capsules of Vitanica's green tea, which include 50 mg of whole plant (95% polyphenols, 80% catechins, 55% EGCG, 10% caffeine)
- *Coriolus versicolor* mushroom extracts from JHS Natural Products (five 600 mg capsules daily in divided doses) × 6 months minimum and either add or put in quarterly rotation with therapeutic dosages of curcumin, artemisia, astragalus, AHCC, or arabinogalactan, etc.
- melatonin, 20 mg at bed

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balancing with acupuncture, and qi gong, as well as Western and Chinese botanicals, amino acids, and other nutritional supplements (Table 1). My goal is to support patients in experiencing longer periods of being in the moment. I have a theory: the more time spent being in the moment, the more time spent vibrating at the appropriate frequency for our cellular being. I like to think that this equates with slowing down those rapidly dividing cancer cells.

Conclusion

Individualized, constitutional treatment of people who have had breast cancer requires adherence to the foundational principles of naturopathic medicine. By identifying and treating the cause, treating the whole person, and inspiring the healing power within each patient by removing obstacles to her cure, we facilitate transformational healing. By combining this approach with evidence-based basic naturopathic care and complementary care methods, we are at the very least inspiring health.

Notes

1. Howlander N, Noone AM, Krapcho M, et al. SEER Cancer Statistics Review, 1975-2008 [Web page]. National Cancer Institute. http://seer.cancer.gov/csr/1975_2008. Based on November 2010 SEER data submission, posted to the SEER website 2011.
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9. Ibid.; 200–201, 207–208.

