Chew On This! Camerota's Cupboard January 2012

Happy 2012! The New Year is traditionally the time for resolutions. Last year there were questions about whether men with prostate cancer should eat meat and/or eggs and if so, how much and what kind. In reading about nutrition, I've learned that research results are often confusing and contradictory. Also new research sometimes changes conventional wisdom. Regular readers of this column know that I rely heavily on recipes from The American Institute for Cancer Research. One of the 2 chicken recipes in this column is from AICR. The Institute offers a nutrition hot line that provides answers to subscribers' questions. I sent AICR the above question and received the following reply:

Dear Ms. Camerota,
Thank you for contacting AICR with your questions about red meat and egg consumption by men with prostate cancer. Generally men with prostate cancer may eat red meat and eggs, either conventionally or organically processed. However, specific dietary restrictions always should be discussed with one's physician.

AICR recommends that red meat consumption be limited to no more than 18 ounces of cooked red meat (beef, pork and lamb) weekly and to consume a mostly plant based diet (fruits, vegetables, whole grains, beans and nuts). According to the scientific literature, there appears to be no difference in the nutritional quality of conventionally raised and organically raised beef. The Mayo Clinic offers a nice summary of organic food here: http://www.mayoclinic.com/health/organic-food/NU00255.

Regarding eggs, the same is true, either is fine. Keep in mind that "organic" is not the same as "free range" or "natural" or "hormone free." So if you specifically want red meat or eggs processed according to USDA organic standards, look for the green organic symbol on labels.

AICR recommends eating at least five servings of fruits and vegetables daily to help prevent prostate cancer. AICR encourages those dealing with cancer to try to follow the prevention guidelines as well. There is convincing evidence that lycopene found in tomatoes (especially cooked tomatoes) and red fruits reduces prostate cancer risk. There is probable evidence that selenium found in selenium rich foods (Brazil nuts and oatmeal) probably reduces risk. There is concern that excessively high intakes of calcium may increase risk, however, optimal calcium intake (about 2-3 servings calcium rich foods daily) decreases colorectal cancer risk. For more prostate cancer prevention information see: http://www.aicr.org/reduce-your-cancer-risk/cancer-site/cancersite_prostate.html

For men who are dealing with prostate cancer, AICR offers the following resources:

Nutrition of Cancer Patient (for those newly diagnosed with cancer and undergoing treatments) at http://www.aicr.org/site/PageServer?pagename=pub_nutrition_cp and

Nutrition of the Cancer Survivor (those wishing to eat well after cancer treatments) at http://www.aicr.org/site/PageServer?pagename=pub_nutrition_cs

I do hope this information is helpful to you.
Best wishes,
Dori Mitchell, MS, RD

In addition regular column reader, Tom Zenge, has found some important research findings about beef that comes from Cal State-Chico. The URL and abstract are listed below.
The electronic version of this article is the complete one and can be found online at: http://www.nutritionj.com/content/9/1/10

Abstract
Growing consumer interest in grass-fed beef products has raised a number of

questions with regard to the perceived differences in nutritional quality between grass-fed and grain-fed cattle. Research spanning three decades suggests that grass-based diets can significantly improve the fatty acid (FA) composition and antioxidant content of beef, albeit with variable impacts on overall palatability. Grass-based diets have been shown to enhance total conjugated linoleic acid (CLA) (C18:2) isomers, trans vaccenic acid (TVA) (C18:1 t11), a precursor to CLA, and omega-3 (n-3) FAs on a g/g fat basis. While the overall concentration of total SFAs is not different between feeding regimens, grass-finished beef tends toward a higher proportion of cholesterol neutral stearic FA (C18:0), and less cholesterol-elevating SFAs such as myristic (C14:0) and palmitic (C16:0) FAs. Several studies suggest that grassbased diets elevate precursors for Vitamin A and E, as well as cancer fighting antioxidants such as glutathione (GT) and superoxide dismutase (SOD) activity as compared to grain-fed contemporaries. Fat conscious consumers will also prefer the overall lower fat content of a grass-fed beef product. However, consumers should be aware that the differences in FA content will also give grass-fed beef a distinct grass flavor and unique cooking qualities that should be considered when making the transition from grain-fed beef. In addition, the fat from grass-finished beef may have a yellowish appearance from the elevated carotenoid content (precursor to Vitamin A). It is also noted that grain-fed beef consumers may achieve similar intakes of both n-3 and CLA through the consumption of higher fat grain-fed portions.

On the other hand, I have read articles that discourage men with prostate cancer from eating **any** meat or eggs or to limit them to small amounts produced organically. It seems that, as with making decisions about the best treatment option for your prostate cancer, you need to be your own case manager about diet. I vote for the Mediterranean Diet, which provides generous servings of fruits and vegetables cooked with olive oil supplemented by small amounts of meat.

I like food journalist Michael Pollan's 7 word advice: "Eat food, not too much, mostly plants." We report, you decide.

Chunky Chicken Soup with Buckwheat
(from AICR)

For generations, chicken soup has been a remedy of choice for mothers with sick children. The lean protein and nutrient-rich vegetables help boost your strength to fight off a cold. But this power combination of vegetables, whole grains and health-enhancing herbs can be enjoyed any time. Our recipe calls for buckwheat, a whole grain that's a good source of fiber and magnesium. It's also gluten-free and is not a member of the wheat family so it is appropriate for those with celiac disease.

2 tsp. canola oil
1/3 cup whole buckwheat
1 cup water
1 large carrot, cut into 1/2-inch rounds
1 large celery rib, cut crosswise into 1/2-inch slices
3/4 cup frozen pearl onions, or fresh chopped onion
4 cups fat-free, reduced-sodium chicken broth, divided*
2 cups roasted chicken breast, in bite-size pieces
Salt and ground black pepper
1/4 cup chopped flat-leaf parsley

*To reduce sodium content to 80 mg per serving, use low-sodium chicken broth.

- Heat oil to medium-high heat in medium-size saucepan. Add buckwheat, stirring constantly, until grains are fragrant, about 2 minutes. Off heat, pour in water, taking care, as liquid will spatter. Return pan to stove, reduce heat to simmer, and cook, covered, until buckwheat is al dente, about 15 minutes. Set covered pan aside.
- Place carrots, celery and onions in large saucepan. Add 1/2 cup broth, cover and simmer over medium-high heat until vegetables

are crisp-tender, 10 minutes. Add remaining broth, chicken and cooked buckwheat. Add salt and pepper to taste. When soup is hot, divide among four wide, shallow bowls. Garnish each bowl with 1 tablespoon parsley, and serve.

Note: If desired, in place of roasted chicken, gently simmer a 3/4-pound skinless and boneless chicken breast in broth in large saucepan. When it is white in the center, about l5 minutes, set chicken breast aside. When chicken is cool enough to handle, shred into bite-size pieces. Clean out pot and proceed, cooking vegetables and completing soup as above.

Makes 4 servings
Per serving: 210 calories, 5 g total fat (1 g saturated fat), 15 g carbohydrate, 25 g protein, 3 g dietary fiber, 530 mg sodium.

Chicken Fajitas
(from *More Nutritious Still Delicious*)
As in the above recipe, the lean chicken and whole wheat plus the tomato make this a healthy, easy to prepare dish. Perhaps the take-away from this month's column to resolve to shop for, prepare, and eat more mindfully, to consider eating less beef and more fresh fruits, vegetables, whole grains, nuts and legumes.

4 boneless, skinless chicken breasts (about 1 ½ pounds)
1 teaspoon chili powder
1 teaspoon onion powder
¼ teaspoon garlic powder
2 tablespoons lime juice
8 whole wheat flour tortillas

Toppings:
½ cup salsa
½ cup reduced fat shredded cheddar cheese
1 cup chopped fresh tomato

1 cup chopped romaine lettuce
½ cup nonfat sour cream

- Cut chicken in ½ inch strips. Place in medium bowl; sprinkle with chili powder, onion powder, garlic powder and lime juice. Stir to combine; set aside for 15 minutes.
- Heat medium skillet for 1 to 2 minutes; spray with cooking spray. Add chicken and lime juice; cook until chicken is brown on all sides and thoroughly cooked.
- Warm tortillas in microwave or oven briefly. Put chicken on each tortilla; add toppings as desired. Wrap and serve immediately.

Makes 8 servings (1 tortilla per serving)
Nutrition information per tortilla (includes 1 tablespoon salsa, 1 tablespoon shredded cheese, 1 tablespoon sour cream, 2 tablespoons tomato and 2 tablespoons romaine per tortilla):
207 calories; 25 g protein; 26 g carbohydrate; 3 g dietary fiber; 2 g fat; .5 g saturated fat; 53 g cholesterol; 352 g sodium