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June 21, 2013

Men with Prostate Cancer, Survival and Vegetable Fats

For the approximately 2.5 million men living with prostate cancer, a new study published in *JAMA Internal Medicine* suggests that eating nuts and other foods high in vegetable oils may play a role in lengthening their lives.

Compared to men with prostate cancer who ate the least amount of vegetable fats, the men who ate the most had a lower risk of dying during the study from cancer or any other cause. Study analysis also concluded that men with the disease may lower their risk of dying by replacing calories from carbohydrates and animal fats with vegetable fats.

The study included 4,577 men diagnosed with nonmetastatic prostate cancer between 1986 and 2010. Every four years the men reported their typical diet during the previous year, answering questions on fried food consumption and what type of fat they used to cook. The study focused on mortality related to consumption of different types of fats: saturated, polyunsaturated, trans, animal, and vegetable fats.

After a median of almost 8 and a half years, 1,064 of the men had died. Most of the men – almost a third – died from heart disease. Another 21 percent died from prostate cancer specifically and another 20 percent from other cancers. When the authors broke fat consumption into five groups, from the lowest amounts to the highest, they found that men with the disease who ate the highest percent of their calories from vegetable fats had a lower risk of dying from any cause and prostate cancer specifically compared to the men who ate the least percent of calories from vegetable oils. Most of the men's vegetable fats came from salad dressings, nuts, mayonnaise and margarine. Vegetable fats are usually high in monounsaturated and polyunsaturated fats.

Using intake and a modeling technique, the authors calculated that substituting vegetable fats for 10 percent of daily carbohydrate calories linked to a 26 percent lower risk of death from any cause; substituting vegetable fats for 10 percent of calories from animal fat linked to a 34 percent reduced risk of death.

For preventing prostate cancer, AICR's expert reports concluded that diets high in lycopene and selenium both reduce the risk. Foods high in lycopene include tomatoes and watermelon; foods high in selenium include mushrooms and Brazil nuts.

Source: American Institute for Cancer Research

