

Real Foods that Heal
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Strawberries

It's hard to find someone who does not love strawberries. A short-lived delicacy of springtime, best when fresh off the vine. I can recall many late spring expeditions to "pick your own" strawberry farms and filling up my little white bucket, while there was an occasional berry that never made it to the bucket. Those were also occasions for my young children to learn that food comes from the earth, not from the grocery shelf! It also made me forever grateful for the hands that pick the strawberries I find in the store, as it is always picked only one berry at a time. And what a fabulous bonus that this delicious berry is also full of cancer fighting phytochemicals! In 2001, researchers from the University of Mississippi and Clemson University took extracts of strawberries and mixed them in the laboratory with cultures of growing breast cancer cells. After 48 hours, the strawberry extract had reduced the growth of the breast cancer cells by 77%! This is consistent with a large study funded by the National Cancer Institute that looked at Chinese women and their risk of breast cancer, finding that fruit intake in general decreased risk. And like raspberries, strawberries are high in ellagic acid, which confers 3 cancer fighting abilities onto strawberries: detoxification of chemicals in the body that could cause cancer; antioxidant ability to prevent cellular damage by oxygen free-radicals; and the ability to actually slow the growth of cancer cells.

And finally, a nasty blow to those who still assert that organic agriculture confers no health benefits. A Swedish laboratory study published in 2006 showed that organically grown strawberries did a better job of inhibiting laboratory breast cancer cell lines than conventionally grown. And since conventional strawberries are near the top of the list in pesticide laden foods, this is one more reason to buy organic, and enjoy those strawberries, knowing your health is worth every bite!

Strawberries

Who needs a recipe or food preparation tip for strawberries? Fresh strawberries need not stay in your house for long, just eat them! Frozen strawberries can be used in baking pies, muffins, or making fruit smoothies. However you eat them, feel good about preventing cancer with every bite of organically grown strawberries.

To your health,

Robert Pendergrast, M.D.

www.realfoodsthatheal.com

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