

# Real Foods That Heal



Weekly bulletin, volume 2, #1  
April 3, 2008

## Green Tea

You probably know I am writing these bulletins from the Augusta Georgia area, where the whole area is preparing for an influx of the world's best golfers, and thousands of tourists and journalists for the Master's Tournament. So I am writing this week's bulletin in honor of "tee time." And when it comes to cancer prevention strategies, green tea is on par with the best dietary strategies we have discussed so far.

Tea (the hot water extract of the leaves of *Camellia sinensis*) is the most popular beverage in the world. All tea comes from the same plant, and the varieties (white, green, oolong, and black) are the result of how the leaves are processed. All tea is also healthy, but research has demonstrated some differences in benefits. The leaves of green tea are processed less than black tea (which is oxidized and heated), so that green tea has exceptionally high levels of antioxidants, notably one called ECGC (epigallocatechin gallate for you chemists; it is a type of flavonoid: see bulletin #5 on cabbage for more on flavonoids). Laboratory studies have shown that ECGC slows the growth of breast cancer cells, even cells that have become resistant to some types of chemotherapy. This is all good news, and suggests that green tea intake may be a helpful adjunct to conventional treatment for breast cancer. But what about prevention?

There is very good laboratory evidence that green tea (ECGC) can inhibit the development of breast cancer by suppressing tumor-associated fatty acid synthase. Additionally, one very interesting study, (*American Journal of Clinical Nutrition*, 2007) looked at the effect of combined soy protein and tea as a cancer prevention strategy (specifically preventing breast and prostate cancer). The conclusion: green tea and soy together may work as a cancer prevention strategy because they also work to reduce the expression of the metabolic syndrome (abdominal obesity, elevated levels of insulin and other hormones that may promote tumor growth and heart disease). This is yet another study clarifying how obesity and breast cancer are linked, and also demonstrating that a specific dietary intervention (soy and tea) can help to reduce both.

So no matter if you are not a golf fan, it's always a good time for green tea, enjoy it and feel good about how you are cutting your cancer risk too.

For more really interesting information on tea's history, the differences between types, and how to make the perfect cup, I recommend <http://www.inpursuitoftea.com/> In the meantime...

How to prepare a really good cup of tea

Take 1 tsp loose green tea leaves in the bottom of a glass measuring cup (Pyrex or other heat resistant), and pour 8 oz water over them that is very hot but not boiling. Use filtered water that tastes good; bad water makes bad tea. Avoid boiling water on green tea, since it "cooks" the leaves and destroys some of their delicate flavor. Let it steep for 2 minutes and not longer if you want to prevent some of the bitterness. Most of the health promoting antioxidants are already in the water after 2 minutes. You can then pour it through a strainer into your favorite tea-cup. Add to the health benefits of this experience by drinking it slowly, giving yourself some space for quiet breathing or peaceful music.

To your health,

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P.S. Your family and friends deserve to know how to reduce their cancer risk by food choices. Please forward this e-mail to them using the link below.

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