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BREAST CANCER... A NEW PERSPECTIVE **BY MITCHELL J. GHEN, D.O., PH.D.**

One of the most feared words that a woman can hear from her doctor is that "you have breast cancer".

When I went to medical school, this disease was most often seen in the elderly. Today, breast cancer is occurring two times more often in the yuppie population. Just 20 years ago, breast cancer statistics suggested that one out of every eleven women would contract the disease, and today it is one out of every eight. In addition, new statistics support the frightening reality that one out of every three women will get some type of cancer.

The question that arises is why? Why are we finding more and more of this disease and yet the survival at certain stages of this disease is no better than it was 30 years ago? First, let us examine our environment. Our water supply, foods, and the air we breathe have more than 70,000 chemicals. At least 25% of these have been proven to be carcinogenic. Added to this equation, when two or more of these chemicals combine, they produce other elements that may also be carcinogenic. Literally, there are potentially thousands of substances that can lead to immune dysfunction, which would allow for cancer propagation. If we examine our diet, we find lots of processed foods with no nutritional value and sugar-laden products that are the mainstay of our American diets. White flour and sugar impair our first line of defense. A specific "T"-cell called "the natural killer cell" will have less than one-third of its effectiveness following a meal heavy in simple carbohydrates such as drinks containing sugars or white refined flours.

Our immune systems are subjected to 10,000 assaults a day, any of which could become a seed for cancer. Of course, if you live in Atlanta, you probably have a high stress level. Stress has been shown to weaken the immune system. Often women who get breast cancer have had a major stressful event within three years prior to the diagnosis. This same front line specialized white blood cell, the natural killer cell, can be affected either positively or negatively by emotions. A fight with your boss, spouse or special someone can reduce the effectiveness of these fighters for several hours. What can we do about these factors? Well, first we can move to the mountains of Peru, but then you would miss your daily dose of stress in the Atlanta traffic; but if that's not practical, consider drinking purified water (I like reverse osmosis the best), at least 6-8 glasses a day. Buy organic fruits and vegetables if possible and if not, use castile soap or an ionic solution to remove pesticide residues from your food. You can find both of these in a good health food store. Meditate, pray, listen to softer music or just go for a walk by yourself. Watch a funny movie. Studies show a 20 to 30 minute good laugh will improve your immune system for up to 12 hours. Limit or better yet eliminate white flour and sugar products (yes, that includes sweetened sodas as well - and don't think that Nutra-sweet products are any better). Remember, sugar comes in many forms, sucrose, glucose, fructose, high fructose corn syrup, honey and maple crystals. Use plenty of cruciferous vegetables such as broccoli, cauliflower, cabbage and brussel sprouts. These vegetables are high in a substance known as di-indolemethane. The studies are clear that this substance can help prevent breast cancer, uterine cancer and ovarian cancer. Think about using stevia to sweeten your beverages. It's 200 times sweeter than sugar without immune compromising factors. Check your breasts monthly. Learn how to do a good breast exam and if you find something that just isn't right, don't wait - see your physician immediately! Early detection and an integrative treatment plan using conventional and alternative modalities are your best chance for a successful result.

For more information, please call 770-457-4677.