



# 25 TOP ANTI-CANCER FOODS

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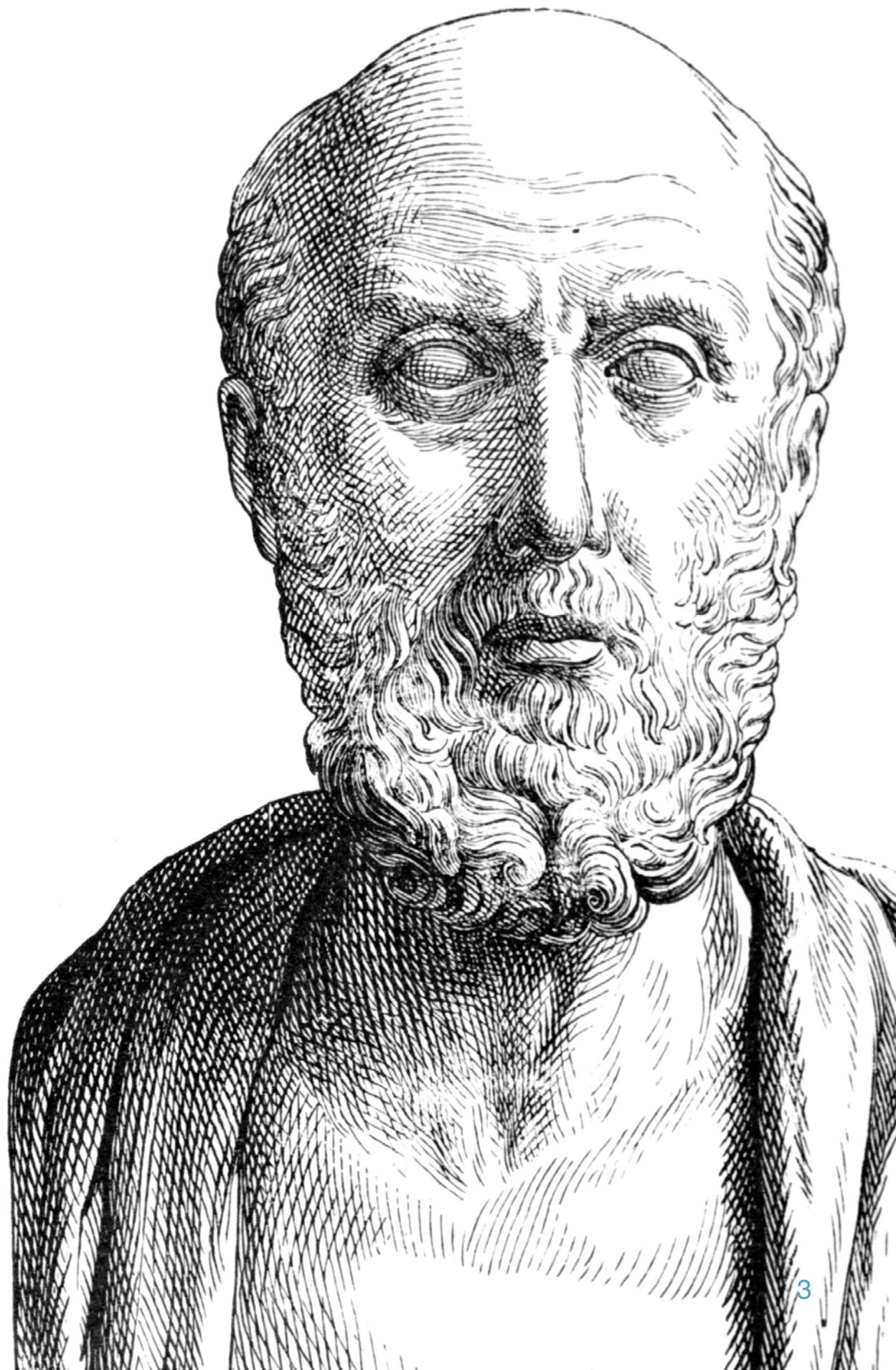
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You must not rely on the information in this book as an alternative to medical advice from your doctor or other professional healthcare provider. If you have any specific questions about any medical matter, you should consult your doctor or other professional healthcare provider. If you think you may be suffering from any medical condition, you should seek immediate medical attention. You should never delay seeking medical advice, disregard medical advice or discontinue medical treatment because of information in this book.

“Let food be thy medicine and  
medicine be thy food.”

— Hippocrates





## GARLIC

The same compound that gives garlic its strong odor, allicin, also has anti-cancer properties. [1] In a head-to-head comparison of 34 vegetables and 8 different tumor cell lines, researchers found garlic to be the only vegetable that completely inhibited proliferation in all oncogenic cell lines (cancers of stomach, pancreas, breast, prostate, lung, kidney, as well as medulloblastoma and glioblastoma).[2, 3] Additionally, it prevents proliferation of hepatic cells [2] and is associated with reduced risk of hematologic malignancies. [4]



## ONIONS

Allium vegetables such as onions, leeks, shallots, chives and scallions have high levels of cancer-fighting organosulfur compounds, which are released as the cell walls are broken down by chopping, crushing, or chewing the vegetables. The organosulfur compounds detoxify carcinogens, halt cancer growth, and prevent blood vessel growth in the tumors. [5] Leeks, onions and scallions inhibit proliferation in oncogenic cell lines of the kidney, stomach, pancreas, breast, prostate, lung, as well as medulloblastoma and glioblastoma.[3]



## CRUCIFEROUS VEGETABLES

Cruciferous vegetables such as broccoli, cabbage, kale, cauliflower, collard greens, radishes, brussels sprouts and bok choy have been shown in animal and some human studies to prevent cancer: breast, lung, colorectal, prostate, bladder cancer [6]. Brussels sprouts, cabbage, kale and broccoli also inhibit proliferation in cell lines: stomach cancer, pancreatic cancer, medulloblastoma and glioblastoma. [3] Brussels sprouts and other cruciferous vegetables contain the potent anti-cancer compound sulforaphane as well as the antioxidant isothiocyanate and glucosinolate, which may detoxifying carcinogens, and block tumor growth. [7, 8]



## SPINACH

Spinach contains compounds that remove free radicals, the carotenoids lutein and zeaxanthin, which are found also in other leafy green vegetables. These carotenoids inhibit cancer cell growth, act as antioxidants and improve immune response. [8] A large study by the (NIH)-AARP Diet and Health Study of 490,000 people found that people who ate larger amounts of spinach had less risk of esophageal cancer. [9]



## ASPARAGUS

Asparagus has the phytochemical saponin, which has a strong antitumor effect, and has been shown to inhibit proliferation and cell death in a human hepatoma cell line. [10] Asparagus inhibits proliferation in oncogenic cell lines of the breast, prostate, lung, as well as medulloblastoma and glioblastoma. [3]



## BEETROOT

Beetroot, which contains the chemo-preventative compound betacyanin, is inhibitory to skin and lung cancers in animal models.[11] Beetroot inhibits proliferation in oncogenic cell lines of the stomach, pancreas, breast, prostate, lung, as well as medulloblastoma and glioblastoma. [3]



## FIDDLEHEAD

Fiddlehead ferns provide flavonoid compounds such as alpha and beta-carotenes, which convert into vitamin A inside the body. Flavonoids inhibit inflammation and tumor growth and may aid immunity and enhance detoxification of carcinogens. [8] Fiddlehead inhibits proliferation in oncogenic cell lines of the stomach, breast, prostate, lung, as well as medulloblastoma and glioblastoma. [3]



## GREEN TEA

Green tea is beneficial against a wide variety of cancers in animal studies: lung, colon, esophagus, liver, skin, mammary gland, prostate gland and bladder. [12] The polyphenols in tea-primarily catechins- are responsible for its anti-carcinogenic effects and high levels of antioxidants.[13]



## GINGER

A traditional Chinese medicine, ginger has been shown to inhibit breast cancer cells, through a pungent component, 6-shagaol [14], which is low in fresh ginger, but high after steaming. Ginger has also been shown to be inhibitory to lung cancer cells, through another pungent component, 6-gingerol.[15]



## **CHLOROPHYLL- RICH VEGETABLES**

Green foods such as chlorella, spirulina, spinach, arugula and wheatgrass contain chlorophyll, a phytonutrient which is known for its detoxification properties. Chlorophyll binds to toxins that are cancer-causing. [16] Research shows that chlorophyll-rich foods reduce tumor cell growth in colon cancer cells and oral cancer cells.[17]



## TURMERIC

The Indian spice turmeric has an anticancer component, curcumin, which has shown promising results in many animal and human cancer cell studies. It functions by targeting cancer stem cells, which are key in prompting cancer cell growth, recurrence and drug resistance. [18] Evidence for curcumin's anti-cancer properties have been shown in colorectal cancer stem cells [19] and triple negative breast cancer cells [20].



## OLIVE OIL

One of the components of the Mediterranean diet, olive oil, is known to have anti-cancer properties through multiple components: its monounsaturated fatty acid oleic acid, squalene and terpenoids. [21] It can suppress the well-known breast cancer oncogene, Her2.[22]



## MUSHROOMS

A variety of mushrooms, shiitake, reishi, maitake and cordyceps mushrooms have anti-cancer properties. It's been shown that shiitake is directly cytotoxic to breast cancer cells as well as having antitumor effects through stimulation of the immune system. [23] The polysaccharide beta-glucan in Maitake has been shown to be cytotoxic to prostate cancer cells in vitro. [24]



## SEEWEEED

Seaweed contains fucoidans, which are inhibitory to human colon cancer cells and melanoma cells.[25] Fucoidan works in a variety of ways, inhibiting tumor growth, killing cancer cells, and working synergistically with chemotherapy. [26]



## BLUEBERRIES

Blueberries contain a compound related to resveratrol, pterostilbene, which suppresses the damage done by irradiation. This compound has been shown to be inhibitory to hepatoma stem cells. [27] The phytochemicals in blueberries have also been shown to inhibit growth and metastasis of breast cancer cells. [28]



## TOMATOES

Higher levels of consumption of tomatoes, which contain the antioxidant lycopene, have been associated with anticancer activity. Lycopene inhibits cell growth of human hepatoma cells and protects against prostate cancer. [29, 30]



## GRAPES

Grapes are rich in the phytochemical resveratrol, and regular intake has been shown to limit the spread of human colon cancer cells as well as prevent them from growing. [31] Resveratrol acts as an antioxidant and anti-mutagen, preventing cell growth in animal models of skin cancer and mammary gland carcinogenesis. [32] Resveratrol is also found in red wine, blueberries, peanuts, cranberries, and pistachios.



## BEANS

Beans contain a number of components which are beneficial. The phytochemical saponin has a strong antitumor effect, choking out the tumor nutrient supply by inhibiting growth of blood vessels, and preventing metastasis of cancer cells. [33] Another component of beans, phytic acid, slows the progression of tumor growth. Also, the B vitamin folate in beans is beneficial in preventing growth of pancreatic cancer cells. [34] Green beans inhibit proliferation in oncogenic human stomach cancer cells, breast cancer cells, medulloblastoma cells and glioblastoma cells. [3]



## BLACK CUMIN SEED

Black cumin seeds and their oil have an amazing array of documented health effects, and there are over 700 peer reviewed studies documenting this. Its active ingredient, thymoquinone, works through an array of mechanisms to attack cancer cells: by directly killing them, preventing growth, and preventing metastasis. [35] It has been shown to produce anti-tumor effects in animal models for pancreatic, prostate, colon and lung cancer, and can be used in combination with conventional chemotherapeutics, reducing the toxicity of the latter. [35, 36]



## CARROTS

Carrots are rich in beta-carotene, an antioxidant that slows cancer cell growth and protects cell membranes against damage by toxins. Carrot extract has been shown to cause cell death in acute myeloid leukemia (AML) cells.[37]



## POMEGRANATE

Polyphenol-rich foods such as pomegranate have demonstrated anticancer effects in animal models, with cancer cell death, inhibition of proliferation and decreased cancer blood vessel growth. [38] Pomegranate extract has been shown to inhibit the growth of breast cancer cells. [39]



## STRAWBERRIES

The ellagic acid in strawberries boosts the action of enzymes to slow the growth of tumors. Ellagic acid has been shown to prevent estrogen-induced mammary cancer through interacting with enzymes in the estrogen metabolism pathway. [40] Strawberries and other berries also have a protective effect through powerful antioxidants which prevent free radical damage.



## SOY

Proteins in soybeans were shown to inhibit cell growth in colon cancer, liver cancer and lung cancer cells. [41] Consumption of soy food has been found to be associated with lower lung cancer risk in epidemiological studies.[42]



## FLAXSEED

A large meta-analysis of over 1800 studies revealed that flaxseed is associated with a decreased risk of breast cancer. It functions by being protective against primary breast cancer and prevents cancer cells from growing. The researchers found that the risk of breast cancer was 18% lower in women who ate flaxseed, and there was a 32% lower mortality rate among breast cancer patients who ate flaxseed.[43]



## ARTICHOKES

Artichokes have the anticancer and antioxidant compound, silymarin. Artichokes reduce proliferation and induce cell death in leukemia cells and liver cancer. [44]



## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Razi Berry is the host and publisher of the award-winning journal *Naturopathic Doctor News & Review*, *The International Journal of Naturopathic Medicine* and preventive health resource *NaturalPath*. Her personal journey from illness to health was the catalyst to a career in the field of naturopathic medicine. She has spent the last decade educating people to live healthier more purposeful lives through publications that bring together leaders in natural and preventive medicine, as well as empowering millions of people to embrace the philosophy that “Prevention is the Best Cure.”



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