Summary of our recommendations and guidance for for those living with and beyond breast cancer

EVIDENCE

RECOMMENDATIONS/GUIDANCE



General guidance

WCRF/AICR's recommendations for cancer prevention

Nutritional factors and physical activity appear to predict outcomes in people living with beyond cancer, but there is insufficient evidence that changing these improves outcomes.

New specific recommendation on physical activity



Physical activity

Increasing physical activity improves health-related quality of life after a diagnosis of breast cancer. People who are more physically active have better health outcomes, but it is uncertain whether increasing physical activity will improve health outcomes.

New specific guidance on diet and body weight



Dietary fibre

People who eat more dietary fibre have better health outcomes after a diagnosis of breast cancer. But it is uncertain that increasing dietary fibre improves these outcomes.

Soy

There is limited evidence suggesting that people who eat more soy foods have better health outcomes after a diagnosis of breast cancer. There have previously been concerns over soy foods increasing the risk of developing breast cancer, but systematic reviews show no consistent evidence of a link between soy foods and breast cancer risk.

Vitamin D

This review found limited evidence suggesting that those with higher vitamin D status have better health outcomes after a diagnosis of breast cancer, but there was no evidence of any benefit from vitamin D supplements.

Body weight

Those with body weight in the 'healthy range' after a diagnosis of breast cancer have the best health outcomes. But it is uncertain that deliberate weight loss by people with overweight or obesity improves these outcomes. We suggest that people consider following as many of WCRF/AICR's cancer prevention recommendations as they are able to.

We recommend that people are physically active. However, physical activity should be increased under the supervision of health care professionals.

We suggest that people consider increasing their dietary fibre intake.

The current evidence does not support guidance to consume more soy foods (or to introduce soy foods if these are not currently part of the diet) after a diagnosis of breast cancer, but for those who already consume them, there is no need to stop.

We are not making specific guidance about vitamin D supplements to improve outcomes after a breast cancer diagnosis.

We suggest that people who are not underweight aim to avoid gaining weight during and after treatment.

Recommendations are based on strong evidence.

Guidance is based on evidence graded as 'limited suggestive'. Limitations in the evidence meant that the panel could not be confident that associations were causal, so we cannot be sure that changing the exposures would change the outcomes. Despite the limitations in the evidence, this represents the best advice based on the current evidence and expert opinion. Outcomes are health outcomes (including all-cause mortality and cancer outcomes) and health-related quality of life.