

Food Better Than Pills for Prostate

By ACSH Staff — November 10, 2003

A new report in the *Journal of the National Cancer Institute** supports what we've been saying right along if you want the benefits of the nutrients in foods, you're better off eating the food than popping pills with one or a few selected nutrients.

Rats were treated with a carcinogen known to cause prostate cancer and then were fed diets including either powdered whole tomato, pure lycopene, or no additive. The animals fed the whole tomato powder had a statistically significant 26% lower risk of dying from prostate cancer than the animals fed the control diet, but those fed pure lycopene died at a similar rate to controls.

The moral of the story? Although we don't know how directly one can extrapolate from this study of male rats to male humans, studies in humans have shown that a diet rich in fruits and vegetables can help to prevent cancer. But, as the authors note, fruits and vegetables contain many chemicals that evolved in combination with each other and that combination may be the way they are most effective.

* Thomas W.-M. Boileau, Zhiming Liao, Sunny Kim, Stanley Lemeshow, John W. Erdman, Jr., and Steven K. Clinton

Prostate Carcinogenesis in N-methyl-N-nitrosourea (NMU)-Testosterone-Treated Rats Fed Tomato Powder, Lycopene, or Energy-Restricted Diets. *J Natl Cancer Inst* 2003; 95: 1578-1586.

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