

Transcript Details

This is a transcript of an educational program. Details about the program and additional media formats for the program are accessible by visiting: <https://reachmd.com/programs/advances-in-womens-health/the-effects-of-dietary-interventions-after-early-breast-cancer-treatment/11138/>

ReachMD

www.reachmd.com
info@reachmd.com
(866) 423-7849

The Effects of Dietary Interventions After Early Breast Cancer Treatment

Announcer:

You're listening to a special focus on breast cancer from *Advances in Women's Health*, sponsored by Lily.

Dr. Birnholz:

Coming to you from the 42nd annual San Antonio Breast Cancer Symposium in San Antonio, Texas, this is ReachMD, and I'm Dr. Matt Birnholz. Joining me is Dr. Daniela Rosa. She is Professor at the University of Health Sciences of Porto Alegre in Brazil, and she's senior author of a recent study examining the effects of diet on early breast cancer interventions. Dr. Rosa, welcome to you.

Dr. Rosa:

Thank you. Welcome. Thank you so much for coming.

Dr. Birnholz:

Well, it's great to have you on the program. This is a really important topic because diet is often overlooked for breast cancer survivors and breast cancer treatment regimens. What can you tell us about what is currently known?

Dr. Rosa:

Okay, this is really interesting because people are very worried about the type of diet, and the type of food they are having, but what we have in the literature studies is they are very different, they are very heterogeneous. So they measure like different kinds of diets. And what we found in our meta-analysis was that losing weight and putting your body mass index down, it's the most important thing. And probably it will have an impact in overall survival and disease-free survival. We couldn't find this because we had too few studies showing this kind of outcomes, but I believe we will show this in the future, the near future. So what we think, personally I believe that you should avoid insulin resistance, so you should avoid being overweight and obese. And probably this is the point, the key to have better health and to have a better outcome after having breast cancer. This is our topic today. But talking about all kinds of diets and people – even for people that don't have cancer, I think it's important to avoid overweight and obesity.

Dr. Birnholz:

And a question, of course, that often comes up, which I think is going to be too early to answer from any meta-analysis at this point, is: Well, which one? There are so many different ways to try to lose weight, but does that ultimately matter?

Dr. Rosa:

Probably not. I'm not sure about that, but when we discuss this with other researchers, everybody thinks that the point is to lose weight and maybe the kind of diet is not the most important thing. We don't have this data now, but I believe that we will find this. And another very important thing, we have another meta-analysis on exercise in breast cancer. So maybe the best thing is to do exercise and to lose weight to have a healthier life and to have a better outcome when you have cancer. So the answer for your question is no, we don't know which kind of diet. Nowadays it's so difficult because it's very common to do several different kinds of diet like low fat, low carb, high protein, Paleo diet, but we don't know if these really have an impact on outcomes.

Dr. Birnholz:

And there have been speculations that because cancers like any other cells thrive on glucose, they thrive on vasculature, but let's stick with glucose. Being able to rob the cells of glucose through, for instance, going ketogenic, might be a mechanism by which cancer recurrence would be diminished. But it sounds like the bigger means to an end is if one loses weight, if they take their body mass index down, that seem to make the biggest impact.

Dr. Rosa:

Yeah, probably. I know that is very common to do ketogenic diets nowadays, but there is no study showing that it decreases the rate of cancer, that it improves the outcome. So we see a lot of patients, metastatic patients mainly, looking for this kind of diet – miracle diets, and what we see in the practical daily clinic is that they don't change the outcome doing the ketogenic diet, so I think we will have to look closer to losing weight, doing exercise, and then you will avoid other disease; not only cancer. We are talking about breast cancer today, but if you think, it's much wider than that. You should look for your health or avoid other kinds of disease. And exercise and diet together will be very important to allow this. And I – I don't believe ketogenic diets will modify the outcomes. I think it's only theory, like we have theories for all other kinds of diets actually.

Dr. Birnholz:

Well from theory to old guard adages, there's the concept that the diet that truly works is the one that you keep. And it sounds like your meta-analysis in many respects is supporting that.

Dr. Rosa:

Yeah, exactly that. That people who could lose weight and improve their measures were the patients that were better and probably they will have better survival. So I agree with you. You have to follow one diet at all.

Dr. Birnholz:

So looking ahead, what do you think are the next steps to be able to get a little bit more information about the specific effects that diet can play in early breast cancer treatment?

Dr. Rosa:

Probably we will have to study biomarkers, blood biomarkers like to see how they change in the blood. To do some different diets, and we will measure these biomarkers and probably we will understand people who lose weight and how the biomarkers goes in the blood, I think it's the future. And we are planning to do a perspective trial measuring these biomarkers.

Dr. Birnholz:

Dr. Rosa, we are going to be on the other side of that trial to ask you some questions. I hope you'll be available.

Dr. Rosa:

Oh sure, my pleasure. Thank you so much.

Dr. Birnholz:

Thank you so much for your time. I've been speaking with Dr. Rosa from the University of Federal Health Sciences of Porto Alegre, Brazil. And we've been talking about the effects of diet after early breast cancer treatment. Dr. Rosa, thanks again.

Dr. Rosa:

Thank you very much.

Dr. Birnholz:

For access to this and other episodes on breast cancer research and treatment, visit reachmd.com where you can be part of the knowledge. I'm Dr. Matt Birnholz. Thanks so much for listening.

Announcer:

You've been listening to this special focus on breast cancer from *Advances in Women's Health*. To revisit any part of this discussion and to access other episodes in this series, visit reachmd.com/advancesinwomen'shealth. Thank you for joining us.