



## Top 10 Naturopathic Tips for Breast Health

by Mahalia Freed, ND

Lately it seems like pretty much everyone knows someone who has been affected by breast cancer, and media coverage is constant. Understandably, this has created a lot of fear. But what the media doesn't emphasize is that the majority of cancer is caused by "diet & lifestyle" and environmental factors rather than *genetic heredity*, which in fact *accounts for only about 7% of breast cancer*.

In other words, *there are many things you can do to enhance your overall health, and dramatically decrease your risk of developing breast cancer or a recurrence of cancer*. Below is a list of my top 10 tips for proactive breast health. For more information, and for an individualized health plan, consult with Mahalia Freed, ND or your naturopathic doctor.

1. **Be in touch**—know your breasts, be familiar with their changing lumps; get regular breast exams
2. **Go with the flow**—Ensure optimal functioning of your lymphatic system by: wearing proper-fitting bras & wearing them less often, doing gentle dry skin brushing, and/or using therapeutic oils such as breast/chest oil or castor oil
3. **Get physical**—Regular physical activity and minimal alcohol consumption are associated with lowered rates of breast cancer
4. **Sweat it out**—Regular saunas, especially infrared saunas, promote excretion of some of the cancer-causing chemicals we accumulate in our tissues.
5. **The clear choice**—Minimize exposure to harmful estrogenic chemicals: do not microwave in plastic (or at all!), convert to storing food & water in glass or stainless steel, avoid PVC products, eat organic more often, avoid canned food (tin cans contain Bisphenol A in the lining)
6. **Spice up your life**—Include turmeric, a classic Indian spice, in your cooking to decrease inflammation and inhibit cancer; include Rosemary for enhanced phase II liver detoxification & estrogen metabolism
7. **Right for the gut**—Freshly ground flax (1-2 tbsp daily in a smoothie/on salad/in cereal) is not only a great source of fibre (aim for 30 g of fibre per day), but will help to eliminate highly active estrogen, improve gut flora, and is clinically proven to decrease tumor size
8. **B is for ...*Brassicas***—A family of veggies, including broccoli, kale, cabbage, and bok choy that not only contain loads of vitamins and minerals, but also contain indole-3-carbinol, a substance known to inhibit the growth of breast cancer cells and stimulate cancer cell death
9. **Eat this up**—Aim for a rainbow of colours in your 8 daily servings of vegetables and fruits; choose whole foods rather than processed foods; include lentils & beans
10. **A well-oiled machine**—Choose healthy fats: olive oil, fish oil, organic animal products (and grass-fed if beef, elk, venison, buffalo...)

Mahalia Freed is a naturopathic doctor with a clinical focus in women's health. In addition to private practice, Mahalia regularly lectures & does workshops on breast health, therapeutic nutrition, and other topics. For more information, please visit [www.dandelionnaturopathic.ca](http://www.dandelionnaturopathic.ca).