

Holistic approach to prevent breast cancer?

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Meet the Experts

Dan Benor, M.D. is a holistic psychiatrist, author, and teacher of holistic approaches to medical treatment.

Patricia Johnson, M.D. is a family practitioner in Robbinsville, North Carolina, with a special interest and expertise in holistic medicine.

Marisa Weiss, M.D. is an oncologist specializing in breast cancer and the founder, president, and guiding force behind Breastcancer.org.

Question from **Terra**: Is there a holistic approach being used to help prevent breast cancer, and, if so, what is it?

Answers —**Patricia Johnson, M.D.**: The holistic approach to preventing breast cancer is the same holistic approach to living a healthy life. It includes regular exercise, stress reduction, a healthy diet, and management of one's emotional well-being. Often, nutritional supplements may also be appropriate. There are other variables that we feel may affect breast cancer risk, including avoiding excessive alcohol consumption, quitting smoking, evaluating one's family history of breast cancer and overall lifetime estrogen exposure. These may be important for preventing not only breast cancer, but other diseases as well.

Dan Benor, M.D.: Also, spiritual affiliation and practice have been shown in hundreds of studies to be good for your health.

Marisa Weiss, M.D., president and founder: What about the power of prayer, specifically?

Dan Benor, M.D.: We're just beginning to appreciate that prayer is a potent influence for healing. Studies published in the past dozen years in medical journals appear to confirm this. There are also studies in parapsychology and nursing journals that demonstrate the effects of prayer or meditation on healing, sometimes from great distances.

Marisa Weiss, M.D., president and founder: I'm fascinated by how much variability there is among people and their practice of prayer. For some, it is very private and meditative; for others it may be public, within a defined spiritual group, where it may be their mechanism of connecting to other people, like chanting. There are so many ways to practice a spiritual approach.

On Wednesday, October 16, 2002, our Ask-the-Expert Online Conference was called **Complementary and Holistic Treatments**. **Daniel Benor, M.D., Patricia Johnson, M.D., and Marisa Weiss, M.D.** answered your questions about what complementary and holistic treatments are, how to find reliable practitioners, and which might be the best treatments for you.

The materials presented in these conferences do not necessarily reflect the views of breastcancer.org. A qualified healthcare professional should be consulted before using any therapeutic product or regimen discussed. All readers should verify all information and data before employing any therapies described here.

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