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Cancer-Proofing Your Body

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NF-Jan31 Cancer-Proofing Your Body

Lifestyle medicine pioneer Nathan Pritikin was an unlikely candidate to spark a nutrition revolution. He wasn't a doctor or dietician but an engineer. As featured in my 2-min. NutritionFacts.org video *Engineering a Cure*, he reversed his own heart disease with a plant-based diet and went on to help millions of others. He even saved the life of my own grandmother, which is what inspired me to go into medicine.

Pritikin's work has continued through his research foundation. Once Dean Ornish proved that *Our Number One Killer Can Be Stopped*, the focus shifted from heart disease to cancer. In my 3-min. video *Ex Vivo Cancer Proliferation Bioassay*, I describe an elegant series of experiments in which people were placed on different diets and their blood was then dripped on cancer cells in a petri dish to see which diet was more effective at suppressing cancer growth.

As you can see in the video, even the blood of those on a standard American diet (S.A.D.) fights cancer, but the blood of those on vegan diets fights about 8 times better. The blood circulating within the bodies of vegans appears to have nearly 8 times the stopping power when it comes to cancer cell growth. That was after maintaining a plant-based diet for a year though. Subsequent studies against breast cancer showed the power of eating plants for just two weeks. Watch *The Answer to the Pritikin Puzzle* to see the remarkable results.

This dramatic strengthening of cancer defenses was after 14 days of a plant-based diet and exercise—they were out walking 30 to 60 minutes a day. Although Pritikin started out reversing chronic disease through diet alone, later—to his credit—he added an exercise component as well. That's great for the patients, but scientifically it makes it hard to tease out which intervention is doing what. Maybe the only reason their blood started becoming so effective at suppressing cancer growth was because of the exercise—maybe the diet component had nothing to do with it. This had to be put to the test.

In my 4-min. video *Is It the Diet, the Exercise, or Both?* I describe the experiment. Three groups were compared: a plant-based diet and exercise group, an exercise only group, and a control group that did neither. The diet and exercise group had been on a plant-based diet for 14 years along with moderate exercise as simple as walking every day. The second group was exercise and hardcore exercise at that: 14 years of daily, strenuous, hour-long exercise like calisthenics, but they ate the standard American diet. Which group was better at fighting cancer?

The researchers took petri dishes brimming full of human prostate cancer cells and dripped blood from each of the three groups on different dishes to see whose blood killed off more cancer. Watch the diet vs. exercise video to see actual photomicrographs of the effects on cancer cells. Basically they found that strenuous exercise helped, but nothing appeared to kick more cancer butt than a healthy diet.

Even though diet appears more powerful than exercise in terms of rallying one's cancer defenses it doesn't mean we can't do both. In fact eating certain plants may even improve athletic performance—check out my video series that starts with *Doping With Beet Juice* and ends with *So Should We Drink Beet Juice Or Not?*

-Michael Greger, M.D.

PS: If you haven't yet, you can subscribe to my videos for free by clicking [here](#) and watch my 2012 year-in-review presentation *Uprooting the Leading Causes of Death*.

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Dr. Michael Greger

About Michael Greger M.D.

Michael Greger, M.D., is a physician, author, and internationally recognized professional speaker on a number of important public health issues. Dr. Greger has lectured at the Conference on World Affairs, the National Institutes of Health, and the International Bird Flu Summit, among countless other

symposia and institutions, testified before Congress, and was invited as an expert witness in defense of Oprah Winfrey at the infamous "meat defamation" trial. Currently Dr. Greger proudly serves as the Director of Public Health and Animal Agriculture at the Humane Society of the United States.

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