

Prevention

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6 surprising diet mistakes

(you don't know you're making)

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Up all night?
20 natural sleep remedies

Robin Roberts

How she conquered her secret depression

Dr. Oz's tips for pain-free health screenings

in March/April of '08. It wasn't until the end of that summer that I started to feel I wasn't depressed. Even when I went on vacation to Saint Lucia, I was kind of depressed, even though it was such a beautiful place.

You could never tell from watching you on air.

No. But people who know me really well said that my eyes were sad.

Did you take something for depression?

I was seeing a therapist who recommended that. But no, I really didn't want to take any meds for it. It was a full year before [the chemo] was all washed out of my system, which was much longer than I thought it would be.

It's been three and a half years since your diagnosis. Is your doctor saying you can be considered cancer free if there's no recurrence by the five-year mark?

Well, unfortunately for me, my tumor was triple-negative, which is a very aggressive form [*Editor's note: meaning none of the hormonal receptors found in cancerous tumors are detected*]. You don't get the "all clear" at five or seven years, because they don't have anything to prevent it from coming back in the same way they do with other types. Tamoxifen doesn't work for me. One thing I've learned, though, is that if you keep your body fat below a certain point, you're less likely to have a recurrence. So I started working with a nutritionist, Rachel Beller.

What does she do for you?

What does she *not* do? If I say I eat at a particular restaurant a lot, I fax her the menu, and she'll circle things that I should eat. For me, it's about convenience. So she's always looking for organic things for me to have in my bag. She's very big

on those little mini cheeses and organic snack bars and dark chocolate pellets.

So you're not a big meat eater anymore?

No, and I do miss it. Every now and again I just really have to have that steak or lamb chop. But yeah, B.C.—before cancer—I would eat red meat probably three or four times a week, easily.

Do you believe that there's a connection between too much red meat and cancer?

I am *convinced* that the amount of red meat I consumed contributed to it. I would justify it, saying it wasn't like junk food. But it was also all the sodium in canned foods I ate too.

So how do we get people to eat more whole foods, more organic?

First of all, you make good natural, organic food more affordable. You can't ask people to do the right thing and have it be five times more expensive. Some of the organic stuff was an acquired taste for me. Eating more vegetables. Salty potato chips taste better than the baked ones. But now I can tell when something's organic or not. An apple's not supposed to be *this big*. [*She cups her hands to form a basketball-size apple.*] I wish I could just understand why fat and grease taste so doggone good!

You have said that being fit didn't prevent you from getting cancer, but it helped you fight it.

Yes. It was part of the reason I almost didn't go public with my diagnosis—I was embarrassed. I felt, *Oh, I've always talked about exercising. And I got cancer.* And then I realized it's a great example of showing that cancer can hit anyone at any time. And if you've done the right things prior, that's going to help you.

What sort of exercise are you doing now, postcancer?