

VOGUE

The Future of
Younger-Looking Skin
NEEDLE-FREE BOTOX

OCT

BEAUTY
& BRAINS

Rachel Weisz

Why She's
One of
Hollywood's
Smartest
Stars

LIFE AFTER
BREAST
CANCER
Not Just
Surviving
but Thriving

ENDURING LOVE
HOW A MARRIAGE
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breast cancer thrivers

Kittrell's serene space has Brazilian cherrywood floors, Japanese screens, and a marble fireplace. She leads 50 or so women through flowing, full-body exercises that relieve tightness caused by scarring, reverse loss of range and motion, and calm stress. She specifically targets posture because many women instinctively develop a chest-protecting hunch during treatment. "It may be subtle, but it's there, and it creates other kinds of discomfort, like back pain," she says of lingering postural problems. She also lavishes attention on the hip area. "Chemo does a number on all the joints, especially the hips," says Kittrell. "So I do these great hip-opener movements."

In Denver, renowned plastic surgeon Christine Rodgers, M.D., who has weathered the disease herself, has designed dance classes with moves that help the shoulder area, which is usually stiff from inactivity and, sometimes, nerve damage. "Some patients who had 'frozen' shoulders for years were able to participate in all forms of activities once again," she says. A few studios even waive the fee, including New York City's OM Yoga, which offers a free class for breast cancer survivors every Tuesday.

HEALING FOODS

Nutritional oncology is a young science, and researchers are still discovering the elusive links between diet and cancer. But experts agree on a few general guidelines to fend off recurrence (and, for all women, to prevent the illness). The consensus: Avoid processed sugar and limit alcohol to one drink a day, max—and if you have a family history of breast cancer, even less. Eat meat sparingly, and pile on the fruits and vegetables, at least five cups a day, as well as plenty of legumes, omega-3s, and "good" fats like olive oil.

In recent years, a number of nutritionists have tailored their practices specifically to survivors, teaching them how to eat to rebuild chemo-sapped muscles and bolster immunity. One of the most prominent is Rachel Beller, founder of

the Beller Nutritional Institute in Beverly Hills. A specialist in nutritional oncology and a former clinical researcher at Cedars-Sinai, she now runs a private practice that caters to a star-studded client list, including Sheryl Crow.

One of Beller's mantras: Eat 30 to 35 grams of fiber a day. "I'm a big fiber pusher," she says. "There are numerous studies showing that high-fiber diets prevent breast cancer."

"Prunes have twice the antioxidant capacity of blueberries; they just can't get the PR because they're prunes"

Her favorite preventive superfoods include omega-3-rich sardines ("one of the absolute best things for you; have it on a Wasa cracker or wrap it in nori"), wild salmon, and trout, as well as two to three moist prunes daily. "They have twice the antioxidant capacity of blueberries," Beller says. "They just can't get the PR because they're prunes."

When it comes to the crucial fruit-and-veg servings, one of her secret weapons is half a cup of broccoli sprouts a few times a week. "They're loaded with sulforaphane, which is a phytonutrient that stimulates very strong detoxifying enzymes," she says. (Linus Pauling Institute researchers were excited to discover last year that broccoli sprouts have 50 times more sulforaphane than mature broccoli.) "They're a powerhouse of nutrients," says Beller. "Use them instead of lettuce in your sandwich or add them to salads."

As for liquids, she urges clients to drink green tea, which may short-circuit the cancer process. "In most of the studies I've been reviewing, subjects drink seven to nine cups, which is totally unrealistic," she says. Instead, she steers people to matcha green tea, beloved by the Japanese, in which the nutrient-rich whole leaves are ground to a potent powder.

Beller has seen exhausted, chemo-addled clients blossom as they follow her plan. "You're taking a toolbox, which is your refrigerator, and pulling stuff out to build strength and protect you," she says. "I have clients who are five, ten years out from being diagnosed. Even better, I have women 20 years out." □