

A collage of healthy food items. In the top left, a white bowl contains round, golden-brown crackers and green pumpkin seeds. In the top right, a white ceramic bowl with purple floral patterns holds dried, light-brown seed pods. In the bottom left, a whole red and yellow apple is shown. In the bottom right, a white bowl contains several slices of roasted apple, showing a golden-brown exterior and a lighter interior. A semi-transparent white banner with a dark red border is overlaid across the center of the image, containing the text.

# A Nourishing Approach to Diet

With Kirsten Chick



# My experience with cancer

- 1998 cancer diagnosis
- 2003 qualified as Nutritional Therapist
- 2003 first cancer client
- 2013 started presenting workshops and speaking at events/conferences for Yes to Life cancer charity
- 2021 joined the newly relaunched BSIO – British Society for Integrative Oncology



# Why is nutrition important?

# Enjoyment



# Personalised nutrition

- Your current goals and priorities
- What's going on right now – whole body/self
- Medical/life history
- Family history
- Tests

# Side effects and symptoms

- Energy
- Motivation
- Brain fog
- Sleep
- Headaches
- Constipation/diarrhoea
- Indigestion/acid reflux
- Nausea
- Skin problems/damage
- Joint pain
- Muscle loss
- Nerve damage
- Bladder/urinary issues
- White blood cells
- Inflammation
- Menstrual issues
- Hormone balance
- Stress resilience
- Anxiety
- Etc!

# Anti-cancer properties

- Epigenetic
- Protect against DNA damage
- Anti-inflammatory
- Anti-tumour
- Trigger apoptosis
- Anti-angiogenesis (tumour hijacking blood supply)
- Prevent metastasis (spreading to other sites)
- Support and regulate immune activity
- Support healthy metabolic processes
- Regulate hormones
- Detoxify carcinogens
- Regulate microbe balance:
  - Bacteria
  - Viruses
  - Fungi/molds

# Polyphenols



- Rainbow of vegetables
- Anti-inflammatory
- Antioxidant
- Prebiotic



# Turmeric

- Anti-inflammatory
- Inhibits tumour initiation, promotion, invasion, angiogenesis and metastasis
- Chemosensitiser and radiosensitizer in some cases
- Can protect organs and oral mucosa from chemo and radio-induced toxicity



# Medicinal mushrooms

- Shiitake, reishi, maitake, lion's mane, turkey tail, cordyceps, coriolus, button (portobello, crimini), oyster etc.
- Anti-tumour
- Antioxidant
- Anti-inflammatory
- Immunoregulatory
- Liver protective
- Prebiotic
- Microbe balancing

"12 Medicinal Mushrooms" by Juan C. Mirre Gavalda and Catalina Fernandez de Ana Portela



# Why so many “cancer diets”?

1. **We are all unique**
  2. **Cancer is multifactorial**
- Therefore what you need may differ from other people you know, even with the same diagnosis
  - My job is to help you find out what suits you, what works for you, both physically and practically





# Dietary approaches





# Plant-based and vegan

- Polyphenol-rich
- Animal produce pros and cons
  - If including animal produce, quantity and quality may be crucial
  - Evidence for association between dairy and cancer still very mixed
- Protein sources and variety
- Vitamin B12 - supplement
- EPA/DHA - supplement
- Iron – kale, broccoli, parsley (avoid supplements unless prescribed)
- Calcium – green leafy veg, nuts, seeds
- Raw vs. cooked

# Ketogenic / very low carb diets

- Reduce inflammation triggered by high carbohydrate intake
- Improve metabolic flexibility
- Ketones as powerful antioxidants
- Fast-mimicking
- Ensure enough fats/oils to induce ketosis:
  - Work out macros
  - MEASURE ketones
- If liver/gallbladder/lymph struggling to process this level of fats, then consider different approach

# Intermittent fasting

- Also ketone-producing
- Promising evidence – especially for men
- For women:
  - 13 hours +
  - Don't skip breakfast!
  - E.g. last meal at 6pm, breakfast at 7.30

**“In this large prospective cohort of patients with early-stage breast cancer, a short nightly fasting duration (<13 hours per night) was associated with a 36% higher hazard for breast cancer recurrence.”**

Marinac, Catherine R et al. “Prolonged Nightly Fasting and Breast Cancer Prognosis.” *JAMA oncology* vol. 2,8 (2016): 1049-55.

**“In this study, late breakfast was associated with increased breast cancer risk, especially among premenopausal women, compared with early breakfast”**

**“each hour later, the time of breakfast was associated with an 18% increase in breast cancer risk”**  
Palomar-Cros, Anna, et al. "Association of time of breakfast and nighttime fasting duration with breast cancer risk in the multicase-control study in Spain." *Frontiers in nutrition* 9 (2022): 941477.

# Which one is right for you?

- Role of testing:
  - Blood glucose, ketones, HbA1c
  - Lipid tests
  - DNA tests
  - DUTCH tests
  - Organic Acid Test
  - Stool tests
  - Blood tests: vitamin D, iron, B vitamins etc.
  - Alongside case history and **your own intuition**
- What feels good
- Proof of the pudding – don't be afraid to change tack
- Trust your body – settle into it and listen – 3 mindful mouthfuls



# Key principles

- Keep hydrated
- Balance blood sugar
- Improve metabolic flexibility – switch between fasting and fed
- Optimise digestive health
- Optimise detoxification processes
- Protect tissue, mitochondria and DNA from damage
- Regulate immune system
- Calm nervous system/adrenals – fight/flight/freeze
- Enjoyment and creativity with food
- Sense of self-nourishment and loving commitment rather than restriction, judgement or fear

# Stress hormones (adrenals)

- **Fear: fight/flight/freeze response**
  - Prevents flow – functional dehydration
  - Inhibits digestion and absorption
  - Influences oestrogen and other hormones
  - Contributes to chronic inflammation
- **So don't let your diet stress you out!**

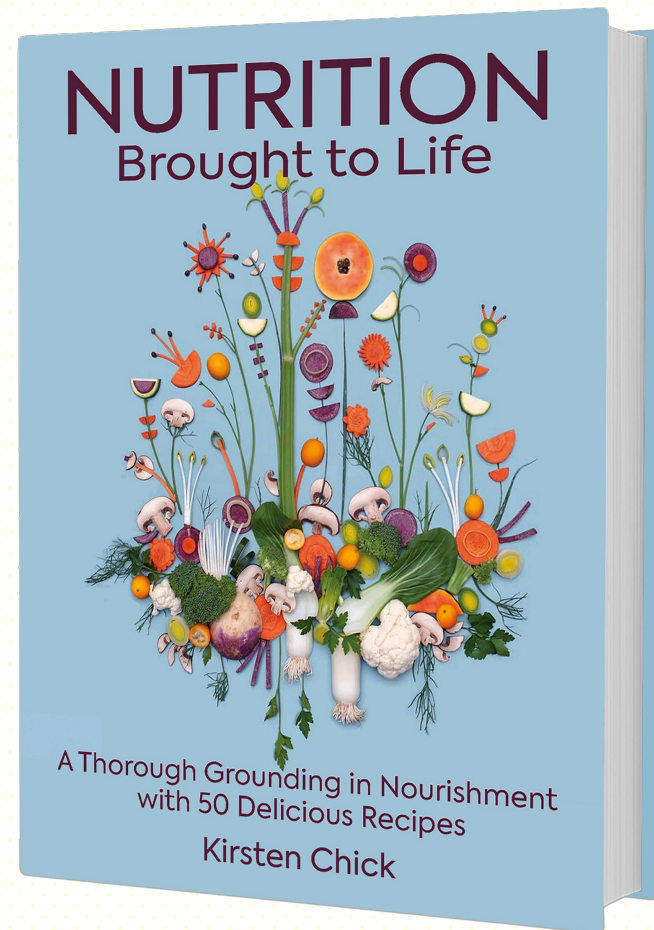


# Three Mindful Mouthfuls



# Keep in touch!

- **Feedback & Questions:**  
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- **Keep up-to-date:**  
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