What's in Your Smoothie?

When you are still alive with Stage IV lung cancer fourteen years after being diagnosed, people want to know why.

October 9, 2020 By Dann Wonser

Friends and Family,

The question I get most often these days from other survivors is about my diet, and it's not because I'm a master chef. My cooking is a little less Wolfgang Puck, and a little more Bizarre Foods with Andrew Zimmern. But when you are still alive with Stage IV lung cancer fourteen years after being diagnosed, people want to know why.

Most survivors are convinced it must be what I eat. I think that's partly true, but there is much more to it. There are many other factors that are at least as important for all of us, like having loving relationships, and a great attitude. And removing the "cancers" from our lives. Having a purpose greater than ourselves. Exercise. Being your own advocate. Spirituality. There are so many things that I think are part of what works that I could write a book about it. Oh, wait! I did that already! You can find it on Amazon by clicking here.

But let's get to what you asked for. Here is my smoothie recipe:

· 8-10 ounces of milk or water (Discussion below.)

· 1 dollop of yogurt (*May be counterproductive if you are on immunotherapy. See below.)

· 1 splash of olive oil (Carries the goodies across the blood-brain barrier.)

· 1 scoop protein powder (I find chocolate hides the taste—of everything—better.)

· 2+ tablespoons turmeric (Laboratory studies have shown curcumin has anti-cancer effects on cancer cells.)

· 1 rounded tablespoon cinnamon (Reduces cell inflammation and lowers blood sugar.)

· 1 heaping tablespoon golden flax seed (Multiple benefits—see below.)

· 1 tablespoon reishi mushroom extract: (May have direct lung cancer-fighting as well as

immune-supporting effects.)

· 1 tablespoon cordyceps mushroom extract (May have direct lung cancer-fighting as well as immune-supporting effects.)

· 1 handful of spinach, celery, or other greens (Easy way to get in another serving of greens.)

· About 12-ish fresh ground peppercorns (High in antioxidants, anti-inflammatory, helps with blood sugar, may make chemo more effective, direct cancer-fighting, boosts absorption of nutrients like calcium and curcumin.)

Drink quickly to avoid settling, and to make it easier on your taste buds. You may also want a water chaser nearby.

Whether you can handle all of this in one drink may depend on your blender. If you have a super-blender like a Vitamix or a Blendtec, life gets easier. Our Blendtec pulverizes everything into a creamy smooth drink with no gross lumps. If your blender doesn't do this, you may want to skip the greens. You will also need to blend the peppercorns and flaxseed in a coffee grinder separately. Grinding the pepper is what releases the piperine, which is the active ingredient in pepper. The flax seeds can pass right through your system whole if it isn't ground.

Here is the semi-happy end result:

Courtesy of Dann Wonser

HERE IS WHY I USE THESE INGREDIENTS:

Dairy is a controversial topic in the lung cancer community, and I have yet to find any definitive answer. I gave up all dairy for a while, until my friend Laura Greco sent me a research article about the BENEFITS of milk. Benefits! You had me at ice cream. I couldn't find that article for this story, but I did find an updated research article here. Without a consensus on the topic, I finally decided that if it ain't broke, don't fix it. I was stable, so I was going to have my dairy.

The yogurt adds probiotics to promote immune health. NOTE: THIS IS POSSIBLY COUNTER-PRODUCTIVE IF YOU ARE ON IMMUNOTHERAPY. Here's an article on the subject. You may want to do our own research on this.

I use protein powder because as a vegetarian, it can be hard to get enough protein in my meals. Note that even though the protein powder is made with a milk derivative, whey isolates, there is a negligible amount of casein in it. Casein is the suspect culprit in milk, for those concerned about its effects on lung cancer. Research your particular brand to be sure.

Here is just one of the many articles on the cancer-fighting benefits of turmeric (curcumin).

Cinnamon is showing up more and more as a direct anti-lung cancer agent. See just a couple of the articles here and here. It is also anti-oxidant, anti-inflammatory, and lowers blood sugar levels. See here for just one more article about this.

Flaxseed has been shown to reduce tumor growth in breast and colon cancer. It also has omega-3 fatty acids, which reduce cancer-causing inflammation and makes it easier to tolerate heart-related side effects of radiation and chemo. Here's a short article on the subject. It has fiber, which helps regulate blood sugar, which also helps fight cancer. There are other heart, blood pressure, cholesterol, and even eye benefits. Some people have to build up to their maximum amount because of possible bloating, gas, and diarrhea. Here are other possible risks and benefits. I choose golden flaxseed because I like the taste better than brown.

Mushroom extract is coming more into awareness in the lung cancer community. I found a meta-study, meaning a study that summarizes all the other credible studies, on the use of mushroom extracts in fighting cancer. The results were favorable for both reishi and cordyceps mushroom extracts. Here it is. While I was trying to dig up this article, I found plenty of others about different mushroom extracts such as this one and this one. As a result of this research, I found one other mushroom extract, turkey tail, that I am adding to my smoothie. It's because of articles like this.

Peppercorns (black pepper) contain the active ingredient piperine. Piperine is released when the pepper is ground, so grind it fresh each time to get the full benefit. Here is a nice article that describes those benefits. However, piperine can interact with medications, may have anti-platelet effects, and possibly other issues. See this caution if you have concerns.

Now that I've shown you mine, how about if you show me yours?

What ingredients do you add to your smoothie that aren't listed above? Why? Bonus points for a

link to the research. Just click “Comment” at the bottom of this post. PLEASE POST HERE RATHER THAN FACEBOOK if possible, so I can keep all the ideas in one place.

Love,

Dann

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