

The Missing Link in Reducing Cancer Risk

By Robert Ferguson

Cancer remains one of the most devastating diseases worldwide. While genetics and environmental factors play a role, emerging research highlights imbalances in dietary fats—specifically the omega-6 to omega-3 ratio—as a significant yet overlooked contributor to cancer risk.

Historically, humans consumed an omega-6 to omega-3 ratio close to 1:1. However, modern diets, dominated by processed foods and vegetable (seed) oils, have shifted this ratio to an alarming 20:1 or higher. This imbalance drives chronic inflammation, a key factor in cancer, heart disease, and metabolic disorders. The pressing question remains: Why isn't this common knowledge?

My Mother's Story: A Personal Perspective

This issue is personal to me. My mother, a three-time breast cancer survivor, was never informed by her doctors or treatment providers about the role of omega-6 to omega-3 ratios in reducing cancer risk. As a nutritionist and leading expert in the study of essential fatty acids and their relationship to health, I was aware of the connection but didn't know there was an easy way to test her omega-6 to omega-3 ratios.

When I discovered the Dried Blood Spot (DBS) test, also known as the BalanceTest, I immediately provided it to my mother to assess her omega balance. Shockingly, her ratio was 32:1—despite taking a popular omega-3 supplement for over four years. This revelation was a wake-up call. Without hesitation, I transitioned her to BalanceOil+, a scientifically backed supplement proven to optimize omega-6 to omega-3 ratios. Four months (120 days) later, her ratio had improved dramatically to 4.7:1. Today, her ratio stands at an optimal 2.7:1.

Knowing that we've reduced the risk of breast cancer for a fourth time through a test-based nutrition approach brings me immense peace. As I always say, "Knowledge is power when acted on."

Understanding Omega-6 and Omega-3 Fatty Acids

Omega-6 and omega-3 polyunsaturated fatty acids (PUFAs) are essential fats that the body cannot produce. They must be obtained through diet. While both are critical for health, their functions differ:

- **Omega-6 Fatty Acids:** Found in plant-based foods, but abundantly in vegetable oils, processed foods, and grain-fed meats, these fats promote inflammation when consumed excessively.
- **Omega-3 Fatty Acids:** Found in fatty fish, flaxseeds, walnuts, algae, and grass-fed meats, omega-3s are anti-inflammatory and regulate immune function.

When omega-6 intake far exceeds omega-3, inflammation levels spike, creating an environment where cancer cells are more likely to develop and spread.

The Omega-6 to Omega-3 Ratio and Cancer Risk

Recent studies confirm the connection between imbalanced omega-6 to omega-3 ratios and increased cancer risk:

- **Higher Omega-6 to Omega-3 Ratios Increase Cancer Mortality:** A 2024 UK Biobank study found that individuals with a higher plasma omega-6 to omega-3 ratio had a 14% increased risk of cancer-related death (PubMed, 2024).
- **Omega-3 Fatty Acids Reduce Cancer Risk:** Research published in the *International Journal of Cancer* demonstrated that higher omega-3 intake correlates with reduced risks of colon, stomach, and lung cancers (Wiley, 2024).
- **Excess Omega-6 Drives Tumor Growth:** Chronic inflammation, oxidative stress, and cancer cell proliferation—especially in colorectal, breast, and prostate cancers—are linked to excess omega-6 intake.

Why Isn't This Common Knowledge?

Despite overwhelming evidence, most people—including healthcare providers—are unaware of the omega-6 to omega-3 imbalance. Here's why:

1. **The American Cancer Society (ACS) and Other Organizations Prioritize Treatment Over Prevention**
 - The American Cancer Society (ACS) and organizations like the Susan G. Komen Foundation focus primarily on cancer detection, treatment, and research funding rather than preventive nutrition strategies. While they acknowledge some dietary factors related to cancer, they largely ignore the role of omega-6 to omega-3 ratios in inflammation and cancer development.
2. **They Follow Mainstream Dietary Guidelines, Which Are Outdated**
 - Many major health organizations, including the American Heart Association (AHA) and USDA, have historically promoted low-fat or "heart-healthy" vegetable oils, which are high in omega-6 fatty acids.
 - The low-fat movement of the 1980s and 1990s demonized saturated fats and encouraged the consumption of vegetable oils (corn, soybean, canola, sunflower), dramatically increasing omega-6 intake.
 - Despite modern research linking excessive omega-6 to inflammation, heart disease, and cancer, these guidelines have not been fully corrected in public health messaging.
 - If organizations like ACS acknowledged that decades of promoting vegetable oils contributed to increased cancer risk, it would contradict their previous messaging and create public backlash.
3. **The Focus is on Pharmaceutical & Treatment-Based Solutions**
 - Cancer organizations receive significant funding from pharmaceutical companies, which benefit from cancer treatment rather than prevention.

- In 2022, the Susan G. Komen Foundation received \$50 million in donations, much of it from pharmaceutical and biotech companies that develop cancer drugs.
- The American Cancer Society partners with large corporations that profit from chemotherapy, radiation, and immunotherapy treatments.
- Emphasizing omega-3s and reducing omega-6 intake as prevention strategies could decrease reliance on expensive cancer treatments—a shift that doesn't benefit pharmaceutical companies.
- Preventing cancer through dietary changes doesn't generate revenue the way treatments like chemotherapy or radiation do.

4. They Focus on Well-Known Cancer Risks, Not Emerging Science

- Most major cancer organizations emphasize established risk factors such as:
 - Smoking
 - Alcohol consumption
 - Processed and red meats
 - Lack of exercise
- While important, the science linking omega-6 dominance to cancer is still considered "emerging research" by traditional organizations, despite decades of evidence.
 - Omega-6-rich diets fuel inflammation, which plays a critical role in cancer initiation, progression, and metastasis (Liu et al., 2023).
 - High omega-6 to omega-3 ratios have been linked to higher cancer mortality (UK Biobank, 2024).
 - Omega-3s provide protective effects against colorectal, breast, and prostate cancers (International Journal of Cancer, 2024).
- Despite these findings, organizations like ACS and Susan G. Komen have not updated their dietary recommendations to reflect this research.

5. Financial Ties to the Processed Food Industry

- Many cancer organizations receive funding from processed food companies that rely heavily on vegetable oils high in omega-6.
 - The Susan G. Komen Foundation has partnered with companies like General Mills and KFC, which use omega-6-rich oils in their products.
 - The American Cancer Society has received sponsorships from processed food manufacturers that use cheap vegetable oils in their packaged foods.
- Acknowledging the dangers of omega-6 dominance would directly contradict the products of their sponsors, creating financial conflicts of interest.

6. They Prioritize Simple, Mainstream Messages

- Public health organizations often prefer broad, easy-to-follow dietary guidelines like "eat more fruits and vegetables."
- Explaining the harmful effects of excessive omega-6 intake without enough omega-3s requires a more nuanced approach.
- Public health organizations assume the general population won't understand or follow recommendations about balancing fatty acids.

The Limitations of Existing Approaches

While organizations like MD Anderson Cancer Center, the Cleveland Clinic, and Mayo Clinic provide educational resources on the importance of balancing omega-6 and omega-3 fatty acids to reduce inflammation and potentially lower cancer risk, they do not specifically advocate for testing individual omega-6 to omega-3 ratios. Their guidance focuses on dietary recommendations to achieve a healthier balance between these fatty acids. (MDANDERSON.ORG, CLEVELANDCLINIC.ORG, MAYOCLINIC.ORG)

Currently, routine testing of omega-6 to omega-3 ratios is not a standard practice in clinical settings. In contrast, I, Robert Ferguson, partners of Zinzino, and our certified coaches trained in the Diet Free Life methodology provide not only education but also actionable tools, such as testing and personalized strategies, to help individuals restore balance and lower their risk for inflammation-related diseases, including cancer.

Restoring Balance: Steps to Reduce Cancer Risk

1. Reduce Omega-6 Intake

- Avoid processed foods containing vegetable oils.
- Replace unhealthy fats with healthier alternatives like extra virgin olive oil, extra virgin avocado oil, extra virgin coconut oil, and extra virgin palm oil.

2. Increase Omega-3 Intake

- Include more omega-3-rich foods in your diet:
 - Wild-caught fatty fish (salmon, sardines, mackerel)
 - Grass-fed meats and pasture-raised eggs
 - Flaxseeds, chia seeds, and walnuts
 - Algae-based omega-3 supplements for plant-based diets

3. Supplement with BalanceOil+

- Achieving a healthy omega balance through diet alone is challenging for most people.
- BalanceOil+ combines high-quality fish oil with polyphenols from unripe olives, which protect omega-3s from oxidation and enhance absorption.
- Clinical studies show that BalanceOil+ corrects omega-6 to omega-3 ratios in just 120 days, reducing inflammation and cancer risk.

4. Get Tested

- Take the BalanceTest, an at-home dried blood spot test that measures:
 - Omega-3 index percentage (optimal: 8-12%)
 - Omega-6 to omega-3 ratio (optimal: below 3:1)
 - Arachidonic Acid
- Testing provides a clear understanding of your inflammation risk and helps tailor a prevention strategy.

A Call to Action: Become Your Own Health Advocate

Reducing the risk of cancer and its recurrence requires proactive steps that many mainstream organizations fail to emphasize. By balancing your omega-6 to omega-3 ratios, you can significantly lower your risk of cancer and other chronic diseases. Here's how to take control:

- Reduce processed vegetable (seed) oils in your diet.
- Eat more omega-3-rich foods.
- Supplement with BalanceOil+ to optimize your omega balance.
- Test your levels to know where you stand.

Take charge of your health today. Order a BalanceTest and schedule a consultation to create your personalized plan for reducing cancer risk. Schedule a call with me, or contact the person that shared this article with you to get tested and begin supplementing with BalanceOil+

References

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3. The Role of Omega-6 in Tumor Growth: *VeryWell Health*, 2024. <https://www.verywellhealth.com/fish-oil-reduces-cancer-risk-study-8743923>
4. Educational Resources: *MD Anderson Cancer Center*. <https://www.mdanderson.org>
5. Educational Resources: *Cleveland Clinic*. <https://www.clevelandclinic.org>
6. Educational Resources: *Mayo Clinic*. <https://www.mayoclinic.org>

Robert Ferguson is a California- and Florida-based single father of two daughters, nutritionist, researcher, best-selling author, speaker, podcast and television host, health advisor, NAACP Image Award Nominee, creator of the Diet Free Life methodology, Chief Nutrition Officer for iCoura Health, and he serves on the Presidential Task Force on Obesity for the National Medical Association. You can e-mail Robert at robert@dietfreelife.com