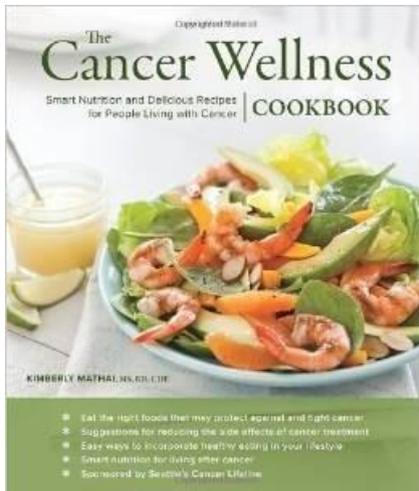


**MACMILLAN
CANCER SUPPORT**

BOOK REVIEWS

Read what people affected by cancer think about...



The cancer wellness cookbook (2014)

Mathai K.

Seattle: Sasquatch Books, 2014.

256pp.

ISBN 9781570619182.

£17.99.

Average star rating 3.7 (out of 5)

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This is useful for someone with cancer, their carer, a relative or friend, and for the public. It is useful at any stage of cancer if the reader can cope with reading about others with cancer and how they coped.

It is well written and easy to understand. There is a varied range of recipes and an interesting introduction. It is an attractive book, with a well-designed cover.

There is nothing about allergies and, as it is written for an American audience, some ingredients may not be available in the UK, especially in remote areas. ery useful as regards healthy eating and I definitely recommend it to others. In fact, my wife is now reading it.

Living with prostate cancer (56-65) (September 2015)

This is a really useful book, with a good introduction and plenty of nutritious, healthy and tasty recipes. It is useful for anyone; family members will benefit from the recipes and encouraging family members to cook makes them feel they are contributing more to the care of a loved one, of course they are contributing!

It is a colourful book with detailed instructions. I found the recipes easy to follow and not too expensive. As a vegetarian, I like the fact that there are plenty of veggie recipes and a variety of ingredients!!

It is a bit on the small side and I would prefer a ring binding; this would make it a lot easier to use in the kitchen. I had to enlarge pages on a photocopier to use them in the kitchen and not worry about getting the book dirty. Not everyone can do this.

Some text on foods that are thought to increase the risk of certain cancers, such as too much red meat, would be useful.

Living with acinic cell carcinoma (46-55) (May 2015)

Although this is aimed at people with cancer, before, during and after treatment, it is a 'healthy living' cookbook, so suitable for anyone who wishes to live well.

The recipes are easy to follow as is the educational information about things such as lowering fat, sugar and salt content. A five-page glossary explains scientific terms and a contents page, recipe list and index are also helpfully provided. The contents of the book are very usefully divided: the right-hand headings being different meals such as 'Salads and Appetizers' and 'Desserts'; the left-hand entries are about health and nutrition topics such as 'The top 10 super foods', 'Coping with possible side effects' and 'Making favourite recipes healthier'. Apart from the technical words, the language is generally easy. But I did find the author's use of the word 'waitperson' distinctly quirky. I would have thought that the label 'waiter' nowadays covers both men and women; 'waitperson' seems unnecessary political correctness.

The ingredients are very clearly listed but not always readily available and occasionally expensive. For instance, the recipe for 'Hearty greens and grains with sesame tofu squares' calls for '1 cup quinoa or amaranth, or a combination'. I don't have these in my kitchen and wonder if many people do. Nor do I have kosher salt, an ingredient in 'Crispy mock chicken salad'; I don't even know what kosher salt is. Tempeh, another ingredient, is explained on the same page, but kosher salt is not. However, some ingredients such these can be omitted and perhaps others added without much difficulty. The information on calorific and nutritional values would no longer be accurate, but I can live with that. Moreover, the book does offer plenty of choices, so there are enough recipes that one can and may like to follow.

A lot of care has gone into the book's research, design and presentation. The introduction mentions that the first edition appeared in 1996, so this update published in 2014 has benefitted from the latest advances in scientific knowledge about diet. One suggestion I would make is to provide the oven temperatures in centigrade as well as in the current Fahrenheit. Frustratingly, the list of helpful websites is limited to American sites. Included in the list is the site for a free quarterly e-zine called CURE Magazine, for 'cancer patients, survivors, and caregivers'. It looks very interesting, so I tried to sign up for it but couldn't because it is only for people who live in the USA.

It is a lovely chunky paperback volume. The cover has a bright photograph of a salad in which avocado, baby spinach leaves and prawns with full tails can be made out. The photographs are tempting and the text is very neatly presented with plenty of white space and an uncrowded look. Recipe headings are given in an orange font. Many of the recipes have additional 'cooking tips', 'nutritional tips', 'Chef's notes' or 'words of advice from cancer survivors', and these are all given below the calorie details in a separate green coloured square that stands out against the white page.

I like many things about this book. It is very readable and has some unusual recipes that I want to try. I particularly like the detailed references at the end for anyone who wishes to look up the sources for the scientific statements that are made, such as selenium being a possible protection against advanced prostate cancer.

Friends who have seen my copy want to borrow it.

Inflammatory breast cancer survivor (56-65) (March 2015)

This is an attractive book, with easy to follow, healthy recipes and lifestyle advice. It will be most useful at diagnosis but is valuable for all as it suggests a healthy lifestyle that promotes the value of cooking and eating from scratch. Perhaps survivors could be encouraged to look more carefully at what they eat. It may also encourage people to grow their own, which would add further physical value to recovery.

The introduction and first nine chapters deal with how to get started and organised. I particularly enjoyed reading about the top ten super foods and keep a keen eye open for them when I am doing my weekly shop, thinking how I can incorporate these in my family favourites. The recipes themselves are very easy to follow. As I enjoy cooking, I had most of the ingredients or could buy them easily and reasonably priced from my local supermarkets. They are also inspiring; I feel I could easily have a go and enjoy delicious food. There is lots of choice, lots of vegetables and fish, together with interesting foods from around the world. It is not a bland selection of food and will suit those who don't follow a typical English meat and two vegetables diet. I particularly like the dips and deserts; a little treat occasionally does wonders for anyone who may feel restricted by a new regime.

It is very pleasing to the eye. The font is clear and a reasonable size (I wear reading glasses). I can imagine it getting marked but I guess it would wipe clean. I personally like a well used and worn book that falls open on favourite pages.

I enjoy cooking for myself, my family and friends and love to cook from scratch. I was very excited when I received this cook book and even more delighted when I realised I had most of the herbs and spices in my cupboards and could easily purchase the fresh goods locally. It would also be easy for a new cook to start storing staple foods like beans and pulses. I love the tips in the green boxes.

I certainly recommend it and am hoping to share some of the recipes with my 22-year-old daughter who, having lived on fast foods for years (her choice, not mine), is now seeing the error of her ways and starting to enjoy fresher, more appetising and appealing healthy meals, equally as fast.

Older persons' cancer advocate (46-55) (March 2015)

This book would have been beneficial in the last months when I was struggling to keep my husband eating. Information was difficult to obtain and I asked many people what I should do to help him to keep some weight on, but even the book that our Macmillan nurse sent wasn't helpful. I don't feel it is suitable for the patient to use.

The recipes are easy to follow although the ingredients would not have been readily available in my cupboard. It is easy to understand and the book is attractive, easy to read and laid out well. I like the way you are given information first to understand how food is linked to cancer and the fact that it may help to prevent cancers forming.

We need more education in schools about the link between what we eat and cancer. If only people had this knowledge in some other form before they are diagnosed.

Carer for my husband who died from cancer in 2014 (66-75) (February 2015)

This is a great book and will improve eating habits and the understanding behind what we eat, hopefully changing lives! It will be useful to help keep people eating when they are feeling unwell and perhaps don't want to – good nutrition is vital to recovery and stamina and this book emphasizes that. It would therefore also help carers to prepare slightly different food to tempt struggling taste buds. I hope people will keep to the suggested regime even when they are well!

Most of the ingredients are 'normal' food that one can buy in a supermarket; some of the American names were confusing but you can look that up on the internet. I was introduced to some different grains and pulses that I had to get in a health food shop, and yes, I would say that I spent more money, although the lists given for the stock cupboard were mostly basic, cheap ingredients and some of the recipes are very cheap. There are also some special quick easy recipes and tips on how to make others simpler and you could leave out the more expensive ingredient sometimes.

I love the layout; lots of information on nutrition but in layman's terms and then top 10 foods. The font is large, there are many colour photos, the paper has an amazing thick waxy feel to it and it is easy to turn the pages, it is easy to read while cooking. Paper. Beautiful! I read it properly rather than just using the recipes. It is so much more than the recipes; even if you don't make many, the book is worth buying. It sorts out the food confusions and fads that are so prevalent. It also has a lovely appearance; it is great to flip through and pick up bits of knowledge in an easy way. The only thing I don't like is that it is American so most of the help references are American and there may be some confusion over different ingredients.

There is a useful section on making the recipes – any recipes – healthier and on substituting ingredients. This is a cancer cookbook, but the cancer-related sections are quite small and the food plans will appeal to anyone who has been ill or is living with a long-term illness. It also helps the rest of the family and carers as it means everyone can eat the same thing and enjoy sitting at the dinner table together, rather than singling out the 'sick' person by giving them something else to eat.

Breast cancer patient (46-55) (March 2015)

This book will help people feel in control following a cancer diagnosis. I like the title, although I wonder if it's a title that people would commonly search for?

Some ingredients are not readily available in the UK and it is obvious that this is an American book as measurements are in cups. The glossary has difficult words but the explanations are good; the text is worded quite officially/medically but I feel this would give the reader confidence in the advice and information.

The cover design is appealing, with pictures of food and quick points about the aim of the book, but I'm not sure the reference to Seattle's Cancer Lifeline would appeal as much as being endorsed by a UK cancer organisation. I like the friendly tone of the author and the photos and appreciate that there is not a photo for every recipe – this means that more can be fitted in.

Breast cancer survivor (26-35) (February 2015)



This book is published by Cancer Lifeline, set up more than 40 years ago in Seattle, USA by a cancer survivor. I'd never heard of them so I Googled and found out they provide support and advice to people affected by cancer. The book is aimed at people during and after treatment. It includes advice about how to cope with some of the side effects caused by cancer treatment, the benefits of super foods and nutrients, how to improve your diet and make it healthier, and points you to plenty of other US organisations for help and support. It includes a good range of recipes for different meal times and plenty of snack and treat ideas.

The introduction suggests following a plant-based diet: two thirds or more of your plate from plant-derived foods and one third or less from animal-derived foods. The recipes reflect this and there's a bias towards vegetarian dishes although plenty of meat and fish/seafood dishes are included to keep as many people as possible happy. Most of the ingredients are easy to get hold of but I had to check a few e.g. arame (sea kelp used in Japanese cooking), Sucanat (unrefined cane sugar), Bragg Liquid Aminos (non genetically modified soy sauce) before deciding if I wanted to make that recipe and was happy to use what I had in my cupboard. Many of the recipes use grains and pulses e.g. quinoa, millet, black-eye beans. If your diet is usually meat and potatoes, some of these ingredients might seem a bit odd. And some pulses can be difficult to digest; I avoid blackeye beans/peas (and a few others!) because I know they don't agree with my body. And I always use stock when I cook quinoa (the cookbook suggests water and salt) because it gives more flavour.

The layout is simple and clear; almost all the recipes are on a single page, some with a photo so you can see how the dish might look – always helpful if you're cooking with ingredients you're not familiar with! I would like to see more photos. The language and tone are relaxed and easy to follow.

I cook quite a lot and I'm used to trying out new recipes. I used a couple of the recipes and found them pretty straightforward. But, oven temperatures are in one format only – nothing for fan ovens or gas –and all the measurements are in cups. It also assumes the user will be the person with cancer rather than anyone around them. When I was going through treatment and in early remission I didn't have much inclination to cook so I don't know how much use I would have made of this book – I might have looked at recipes and asked someone else to make it.

I particularly like the sections on menu planning, eating out, and rethinking the meat:vegetable ratio on your plate. It is divided into recipes for different meal times and it took me a moment to work out 'entrees' was 'mains'. A short glossary explains the scientific words used and the reference section is good if you want to follow up any of the statements in the book. There's an index of ingredients so if you have, for example, a lot of mushrooms, you can find lots of different ways to use them.

I'd use this cookbook for everyday menu ideas but I'd look to other cookbooks if I wanted to cook a special meal.

In remission from non-Hodgkin lymphoma (46-55) (April 2015)

As a cancer patient and as a patient in remission I was keen to make sure I was doing everything I should to help make me as immune to a recurrence as possible. This book is all you need to know to keep you on the right path to recovery.

All in all, it is extremely well put together, although the photography could have been of a better quality. Some of the shots are a bit lacking in definition and when feeling poorly it is the picture that sells. Whether you are a carer trying to ensure the patient is receiving the most suitable diet for a specific condition or you simply want to remain as healthy and cancer free as possible, then this is a must for good health. Look out for the calorific and fat content at the end of each recipe.

Some of the dialogue can be a bit overpowering to start with, but falls into place as the book progresses. Some of the vegetables and pastes will be unknown to most people in this country but substitutes are suggested and the original items may be available in specialist delis. Apart from these unfamiliar items, the menus are very reasonably priced. The websites on pages 63-64 are irrelevant to UK readers and the food labels on page 71 are not in current use in the UK.

It is refreshing to see a cookbook devoted to helping anyone looking for a way to cope with the hardships of cancer as well as how to keep healthy and help prevent it recurring – every cancer patient's dream.

Lung cancer survivor (66-75) (April 2015)

I am more than happy to promote this cookbook, it is so easy to understand and follow by basic cooks like myself, and it has much nutritional information and helpful recipes. It is useful for all stages of cancer and in fact it is suitable for anyone.

It has an appealing healthy meal on the cover, the typeface is good and the photos are well presented. A glossary is essential and this book has an understandable one. Most people will find this book interesting and well set out and want to try the recipes.

Living with breast cancer (66-75) (April 2015)

This book discusses the role of foods in cancer prevention, including how to optimise them. As per the latest research, it emphasises a plant-based diet, with smaller portions of meat and large portions of fruit and vegetables, grains and beans and other plant foods. It will be useful for anyone and at all stages of the cancer journey.

There are some American terms but otherwise it is easy to understand. There is a glossary and list of references and it is well illustrated. There are also tips highlighted in different coloured boxes. It is full of good hints, from how to calculate your protein needs when you are fighting infection to food remedies to combat side effects of chemo and radiotherapy. It also includes practical advice on portion size, healthier options and food safety as well as tasty recipes.

Living with bowel cancer (56-65) (March 2015)

This is a very interesting book that should be useful at all stages. The recipes relate to a very healthy diet and there are good tips on specific issues that would be especially helpful during chemo. The tips from cancer patients on making food more appealing during treatment are very helpful. It is easy to understand and the recipes are easy to follow with most ingredients easily available and not particularly expensive. The headings are clear and it is easy to find answers to specific issues that may concern individual cancer patients.

It would have been very helpful while I was having chemotherapy and recovering from surgery. It will be helpful even after five years to improve my diet and the side-effects of surgery.

Living with oesophageal cancer (66-75) (March 2015)

This will be useful for anyone: patient; carer; family; friends; health professionals and the public. It will be especially good during treatment. It is logical and very easy to understand. I like the print and the book is a good size and easy to handle. I like the informative green boxes, e.g. honey for a sore throat or herbs for diarrhoea. I didn't like having to look up some vegetables because the book is American.

As a vegetarian, I like the fact that the recipes are easy to understand and prepare and tasty. I am a volunteer cook at a retreat centre and the Zucchini (courgette) and Tomato Gratin was well received. The information at the beginning is also useful and the advice to read food labels before buying ingredients is good. The daily menu ideas are great for days when planning what to eat is a step too much. I am using this book a lot.

Living with uterine serous cell and adenoma (56-65) (March 2015)

This is useful for nutrition in all stages of cancer – it helps with some of the problems that cancer patients experience from the condition and its treatment – but anyone interested in healthy nutrition would find it a useful source of ideas.

The recipes are easy to follow without too many steps. Some recipes may be for too many portions at a time, but the number of portions is clearly stated on each recipe. Most of the ingredients are available as basic items. Some use a few speciality items, which should be easy to obtain without undue expense.

It is a very appealing book from the durable cover design to the full-page coloured photographs of many of the recipes. The easy to read font is printed on a high quality glossy paper. I like the helpful tone of the book with well thought through appetising dishes. Although it is easy to understand there is also a five-page glossary of various terms used in the text to provide more comprehensive definitions.

It is written for an American audience so temperatures are given in Fahrenheit and the cup as a unit of measure is vague. I was surprised that in the "Top 10 super foods" alliums were just combined with herbs and spices not given a separate entry, maybe to replace green and black tea.

Many people affected by cancer have difficulty with nutrition and this book will be a great use in giving many easy to follow recipes and nutritional advice. I certainly recommend it to people affected by cancer and others wishing to follow a healthy balanced diet.

Kidney cancer survivor (66-75) (March 2015)

This book is primarily aimed at optimising nutrition before, during and after cancer treatment so is useful for people living with and after cancer. There is a good section on “Coping with possible side effects of cancer treatment” (pp 47-60). However, it is a helpful book for anyone interested in a healthy diet, with an opening section on “The Top 10 super foods” and the bulk of the book containing a good range of recipes.

It has recipes for soups, salads, snacks, main meals and desserts. If you are not in the mood for cooking, it may be useful to read the ideas for making your diet healthier and how to deal with some of the side-effects of cancer treatment such as mouth ulcers, tips on getting organised and getting friends involved, loss of appetite and fatigue. For instance, there is a good tip to make watermelon popsicles if you have a sore throat and don't really feel like eating. I think it would be most useful to read this book just before treatment so you have time to get organised and are armed with tips, suggestions and information on how to stay as healthy as possible during and after treatment.

The recipes are nicely laid out, with mostly one recipe on one page, so there aren't too many steps to follow and not too many ingredients. The book is American (sponsored by Seattle's Cancer Lifeline) so does contain a few ingredients less familiar in the UK, such as graham crackers, Walla Walla onions, Sucanat, canned pumpkin (I did find this in my local health food shop), and some home-style American recipes such as turkey meat loaf (p. 206) and Chicken biscuit pie (p. 207). Personally, I find this refreshing and a chance to try some new recipes. Most of the recipes contain familiar ingredients or suggest replacements for the more unusual ingredients. Some American terms are used for the ingredients such as zucchini (courgette), arugula (rocket), cilantro (coriander) and garbanzo beans (chickpeas).

The book is generally well written but there is an inconsistency in the editing (it is written by a registered dietician but individual recipes have been submitted by chefs, cancer patients, carers and others working in the cancer field). For example, I found chili spelt both as chili and chile on the same page (p. 205). It would have been helpful to be some of the more unusual ingredients in the glossary (e.g. teff, kamut, farro), although some of them are mentioned in additional information boxes within the recipes (e.g. p.164).

This is a nice substantial book with a photo of a healthy and tasty-looking prawn salad on the cover. The layout is appealing and easy to read; helpful cooking and nutrition tips are included in green boxes throughout. There are attractive, colourful photographs of many of the dishes and some more 'lifestyle' type photos of ingredients. I like the range of dishes, the matter-of-fact style of writing and the fact that the book uses up-to-date scientific research but does not compromise on producing attractive meals. I would appreciate slightly more detailed nutrition

information for each meal, e.g. vitamin and mineral content. However, this is a small quibble as the book does have a chapter on specific foods and their nutrients.

The cover describes it as “smart nutrition and delicious recipes for people living with cancer” and promises to show you “how to eat the right foods that may protect against and fight cancer”. Examples of recipes that appealed to me included: spicy miso peanut noodles; spicy chickpea, kale and tomato stew; stovetop fish stew with gingered black beans; grilled chicken skewers with tangerine-ginger glaze. I have cooked two recipes from the book so far; curried root vegetables (p.139) and Indian-style roasted cauliflower. Both were easy to make and tasty. The cauliflower could be done in the oven or on the hob; I did it the latter way which is not a method I’ve used to cook cauliflower before, normally I boil it. The result was a healthy tasting dish and the cauliflower was slightly crunchy. I will enjoy exploring the rest of the recipes.

Uterine cancer survivor (46-55) (March 2015)

A great book for anyone with a life-threatening illness who has lost their appetite. There are a lot of good tips and advice on nutrition. It starts with the top ten super foods, the nutrients that promote good health, and explains how food can help our bodies fight cancer. It will help a patient/carer to know the side-effects of treatment and the foods to eat during treatment that can help reduce them. After treatment, when the patient needs to get back to normal eating, it will help them build up and strengthen. It will also give carers ideas of what to cook at all stages of the journey.

It is a book you can dip in and out of; you can go to a section quite easily. The recipes are very easy to follow. I like the footnotes at the end of each recipe that tells you the nutritional value of each serving, for example the number of calories, the fat content. There are words that we may not have come across or understand. However, the writer does break down these into short phrases to help us to pronounce them and there is a good explanation of what the words mean. It’s appealing to look at, with bright colours on the cover. I like the typeface, the shiny pages. The photos of the food are good. I like the little insets (in green boxes) with tips and notes on the topic described (cooking tips, chef’s tips, for example).

I had not heard of a few ingredients in some of the recipes; it is an American book and sometimes they have different names for certain foods. However, you can find it on the internet or ask at your local deli/store. The help lines and contacts are all American and the book is also quite expensive.

This is different from most recipe books. It gives you the nutritional value of the foods. There are good ideas for patients on chemo when appetite has gone and then taste buds have changed. Plus, it gives you good advice about side effects and symptoms, for example good tips on how to cope with nausea. Reading this book has made me look at my own diet. I am making small changes and reducing my intake of red meat and I have changed to soya milk. It has been a big help to understand food content and nutritional values. Thank you for the opportunity to review this book, it’s been very valuable to me.

Breast cancer survivor (56-65) (February 2015)

This book will help cancer patients to know which would be the best nutrients to take and what helps when side effects occur. It will also help others to understand the problems and how they can help.

The tasty recipes are easy to follow, with well-written steps. The book looks good and is well illustrated. I like the information at the start about nutrition and what helps to maintain a healthy body. The menus are good as are the cooking tips and ideas. I like the tips from other patients about what helped them during chemo.

Although I am knowledgeable, I found the technical words hard to remember. Perhaps those describing nutrients would be more understood by professionals. It can be hard for a patient to concentrate on too much information at the beginning of their illness. On the weekly menus, it would be nice to have the page number of the recipe suggested to avoid having to flick through main book to find it.

I really enjoyed it and found it very helpful. I enjoyed the recipes and would like to use more of them. I will refer to it in the future regarding the benefits of super foods that may help me be healthier living beyond cancer.

Breast cancer survivor (56-65) (February 2015)

This book is suitable for anyone who has any cancer, is caring for someone with cancer, or has a general interest in nutrition. It is useful for all stages from diagnosis, through treatment, to recovery and living a healthy lifestyle. It starts with an overview, explaining why it is advisable to eat certain food groups. There are lots of useful tips and practical ideas to use during treatment to help deal with symptoms such as nausea, fatigue and loss of appetite.

It is a very good size to handle and browse through and the cover is colourful. It is very factual and easy to understand and the glossary is helpful. The recipes are very easy to follow, making very tasty dishes; it is worth bearing in mind that some of the measurements are in cups and may need converting to grams or ounces.

This is a very enjoyable book, full of enticing pictures and recipes to encourage a balanced, nutritious diet. It is evidence based and great for ideas for anyone to use whilst undergoing treatment, recovering, or supporting family and friends. The recipes I have tried are enticing, varied and full of various nutrients. I particularly enjoyed making the blueberry breakfast cake and the family and neighbours enjoyed eating it! Sundried tomato salmon, honey glazed green beans and zucchini and tomato gratin were also delicious and enjoyed by all the family.

Brain tumour patient (oligodendroglioma) (26-35) (February 2015)

This would be useful for carers and family. It is good to look at and if you were looking for this kind of book it would stand out. I like the print size and clearness of the pictures. The recipes look nutritious but are not attractive to my palette.

Carer (66-75) (February 2015)

This book is suitable for anyone who has, or who cares for someone with, cancer, and at all stages.

It's a nice size and the recipes are laid out well. I like the separate contents and the section on nutrition and healthy eating before the recipes. The recipes are fairly straightforward, although some terms may not be familiar to UK cooks. It also uses cups, does not give oven temperatures in gas and some foods are called by different names; e.g. cilantro, zucchini. I would like recipes marked as vegetarian/vegan/gluten free and more basic recipes suitable for the whole family.

It can be difficult to maintain a healthy diet when going through cancer, especially if taste is affected. It may help to try something else, especially if someone else is cooking! If you are used to eating basic food then it may not be suitable, but if you are used to cooking then it would make a nice addition to your cookbook collection.

Womb cancer survivor (46-55) (February 2015)

This is useful for those going through treatment, and for anyone wanting to follow a healthy diet after treatment has completed, either to improve their health in general or to try to minimise the chance of their cancer returning.

The first third of the book is a lot of information on diet and nutrition. This is very well written and easy to read. There are a lot of recommendations but not written in a way that is over critical or prescriptive. I finished it feeling much more aware of the importance of the choices I make in my diet. It has a lot of quick and easy ideas in this section for boosting intake of key nutrients.

The recipes are varied and mostly contain easy to obtain and reasonable ingredients. There are some slightly more unusual ingredients, for example sea vegetables, but these are not used frequently. It is an American book, so some items are less familiar to UK readers, or the names differ, but, again, this is not frequent. All the quantities are American, so you need to be happy converting cups to metric or imperial measures.

It is very easy to understand. It is appealing to look at, with a bright and colourful cover and lots of colour pictures. It's a useful size – not too big, not too small. I found the font size fine, but it might be a little on the small size if you have sight issues.

I am a vegetarian, so as could make use of this book, which is heavily plant recipe based. However, it is also suitable for meat eaters, as it doesn't call for no meat, just a reduced amount (and the reasons for this are very well explained). Essentially it suggests people see meat more as a "side dish" and less as the focus of every meal.

Breast cancer patient (36-45) (January 2015)

This book is in two parts: the first has lots of very useful advice and information on nutrition, lifestyle and the best foods to eat when living with a cancer diagnosis; the second has lovely recipes that are easy to prepare and cook. I like how it is laid out; it is divided into sections, e.g. breakfast, soup, sweets, with one recipe per page and good photographs of the finished dishes. I found the front section on nutrition very informative. The cover is very inviting and it is easy to read

I love this cookbook. I didn't give it five stars only because it is American and uses American measures – measuring in cups is hard unless you have a set. Some ingredients may be difficult to source in some parts of the UK. It uses quite a lot of the American favourite 'apple sauce', which we don't use so much here, but as this is what we know as stewed apple it is easy to make and keep in the freezer until needed. Apart from this, it is very easy to read and understand. It is a cookbook that I will use, unlike so many on my kitchen dresser unopened from one year to the next.

Colon cancer patient (56-65) (January 2015)



This book could be useful at any stage of the cancer journey. The introductory section is mostly sensible advice that anyone seeking a healthy diet should follow. With regards to specific cancer advice, the chapters on nutrients, healthier diet and coping with side effect are particularly good. There is also a useful chapter on food hygiene. However, I probably wouldn't recommend it because it is American and there are some excellent publications aimed at the UK market.

It is appealing to look at, well set out with good photos. However, the recipes are written for an American audience and therefore do not use European measurements. Some of the ingredients are not recognisable here.

Some of the claims are not borne out by current research. Some dieticians do not like the term super food and although the foods listed are nutritionally valuable as part of any diet, there is no evidence that they slow the growth of cancer cells. The same applies to restricting sugar. In fairness, the book does only claim possible benefits.

Carer of husband and daughter with brain tumour (46-55) (April 2015)

These recipes are for anyone wishing to maintain a healthy diet or for changing long-term diet after treatment. There is a good range that I would want to cook. Some are relatively easy to follow, others more complicated. I like the inclusion of the calorie content of each recipe but the ingredients are not easily sourced and terms are not adapted for UK readers, e.g. rutabaga and zucchini. The design is appealing, the photos of the finished dishes are enticing and the book is separated into sections for different meals. It is easy to navigate. I enjoyed reading it and will use some of the recipes; however, I have other books that I prefer to use.

Living with breast cancer (46-55) (April 2015)

This will be most useful during treatment, especially chemotherapy, as it has good tips for coping with eating difficulties. It's well laid out with useful hint boxes to read at a glance. The paper, print quality and style are plain, but suitable for the price.

The recipes are straightforward and well laid out although the many Americanisms may not be understood here, e.g. zucchini. There is also a mismatch between US imperial measurements (e.g. 8oz cup, 15oz can) and the metric calorie and serving weights; this inconsistency could be confusing, especially if dividing quantities. I would rather that it was localised for UK use. I'm familiar with the technical terms as they are common to everyday cooking, but for readers with less experience, many are used without explanation, for examples: "sauté" and "cook until al dente" (p. 164).

I like the useful tips and advice at the front of the book, especially tips such as those for lack of appetite. I have been experiencing sore mouth and gastro problems, along with lack of appetite and weight loss, and the tips will prove useful to my recovery. I can see that these tips would be useful for other patients in a similar position. I also like the calorie information at the bottom of each recipe – this is not very common to recipe books and I like this approach.

Under treatment for Burkitt lymphoma (26-35) (March 2015).

This would be useful for anyone being treated for cancer (particularly during chemotherapy or radiotherapy), anyone having completed treatment and anyone interested in the role of diet in cancer prevention. It will appeal equally to caregiver, patient or cancer survivor. I particularly like the fact that the recipes include a nutritional breakdown; this is helpful if you are interested in calorie/fat/protein/carbohydrate intake.

It is easy to read, with references, a glossary and an index at the end. It is clearly and well laid out on good quality paper and illustrated well with enticing photos of some of the recipes. The recipes are clearly described and easy to follow. It is an American book so the writer uses American spellings and measures and some ingredients sound unfamiliar, (zolfini beans, arame, teff flour, garbanzo beans?), and some research may be required to source them or to find alternatives.

I am a little uneasy about the possible over emphasis on fighting cancer with nutrition. Perhaps more emphasis could have been given to the role that this has in addition to the medical and scientific approaches.

This book is concerned with the role of diet in cancer prevention and how nourishing the body can improve the lives of those with cancer. It would be of interest to those wishing to try to diminish their risk of cancer as it discusses foods that MAY increase the body's ability to fight disease. As far as the recipes are concerned, the emphasis is on taste and texture to stimulate what can be a jaded palate. There are also suggestions for reducing the possible side-effects of cancer treatments through diet, for example nausea, vomiting, constipation, diarrhoea, sore mouth and throat and changes in the sense of taste.

Breast cancer patient (66-75) (March 2015)

This is a good cookbook for all types of patients, carers and anyone they live and eat with, with recipes and advice for during and after treatment. I like the sections at the beginning explaining the different food groups and the reasons they are important. The section on planning your meals and shopping is quite helpful to try to get you into a more structured routine of planning meals that are nutritionally balanced.

As a keen cook, I found it easy to use and there are a good range of sweet and savoury recipes to suit different palettes. It is appealing to look at and the pictures of the various recipes are very appealing. The recipes and methods are well laid out to make them easy to follow, but the measurements use cups; some people may struggle with this if they have conventional scales.

Because the book is American, some of the ingredients may be quite difficult to obtain here. Also, although these are good recipes, several are quite complex; they may not be suitable for cancer patients to cook themselves during treatment as they are quite time consuming and may require a lot of effort.

Hodgkin lymphoma patient in remission (26-35) (March 2015)

This book would benefit anyone, ill or not, but perhaps mostly those who eat very healthily anyway or are very aware of what they eat and the nutritional values of food. Alternatively, it would be a great asset to anyone who is looking to transform their diet completely, perhaps inspired by illness. It is not a book of healthy adaptations to everyday meals, you need to be fully committed to a healthy diet and I would describe it more as a wellness book, inspiring good health and nutritional eating. It would also benefit carers who want to cook healthy, nutritional meals.

There is lots of very technical language at the start but it is always explained. All the nutritional information and science is at the start of the book and the next two thirds are full of recipes. It's a very nice layout and appealing to read. There are a list of contents and recipes so you could easily flick through and find a recipe. There is good use of chapters as well, making it a very simple book to navigate.

The recipes are very simple to follow, there are lots of ideas to take on board and it could definitely assist in moving towards a healthy lifestyle. Although I didn't cook any of the recipes they looked very straightforward and the ingredients are, on the whole, inexpensive and simple to understand and purchase. However, I would prefer to see some more everyday recipes with healthy adaptations and alternative ingredients. Someone who is used to more traditional meals may struggle to find lots of familiar recipes from this. They would need to be adventurous and commitment.

As someone who enjoys more traditional meals (spaghetti Bolognese, risotto, pasta, curry for example), I found this book waded into very unfamiliar territory. It's unlikely I would cook many of the recipes. My wife, however, enjoys a healthier diet and would embrace lots of the recipes. There is a lot here for the nutritionally aware or the health conscious. I would like this to be seen as a positive review, but written by someone who doesn't study nutrition as much as he should!

In remission from Hodgkin lymphoma since 2006 (36-45) (February 2015)

This book is attractive and I like the recipes, mostly for later after treatment has ended, but as a head and neck patient, I would not be able to tolerate a lot of the ingredients. The recipes are easy to follow, but not cheap, and, as the book has a heavy American influence, some ingredients may be difficult to obtain. I can't help thinking that a lot of the content is based on opinion rather than hard facts.

One comment: regarding swallowing, it says try tilting your head back or moving it forward while swallowing (p. 53). Moving it forward is fine, but I was told to never tilt your head back to swallow as this can lead to aspiration.

Head and neck cancer patient (cancer of the parotid gland) (56-65) (February 2015)



This is a well-made paperback with several well-designed moderate- to high-quality pictures (not every recipe is illustrated). It appears to promise recommendations that might reduce the risk of relapse or decrease the progression of advanced cancer. These are phrases such as “Fight cancer with food” and a description of some items as “Super foods”. These promises are not founded on scientific data.

The recipes are not always easy to follow because it uses American measures without a conversion table. Also, several foods have unfamiliar names that are not explained. Otherwise, the recipes appear complete and practical, and most ingredients easily obtained. The advice on running a clean kitchen and on safe cooking and storing of food is good. There are also helpful sections on coping with side effects of treatment, on getting organised and on accepting help.

The book was first published in 1996; the second edition was published in 2004 and reprinted in 2014, probably without many changes to the recipes. The recipes appear somewhat dated, and the emphasis on low-fat food in a healthy diet is possibly questionable in 2015, but page 113 shows an understanding of lactose intolerance that is currently accepted, and pages 219 and 220 show a recognition of the ill-advised presence of trans fats in some manufactured foods. A glossary that included the unfamiliar American food words would increase the book's appeal.

A lot of the advice is sound and many of the recipes look useful but the book is spoilt for me by its reckless promises. I believe that there is no special diet for people with cancer, and I will not be keeping this book.

Living with breast cancer (Over 75) (March 2015)

This would be suitable for anyone wanting a basic introduction to healthy eating and incorporating foods into their diet that may help in the fight against cancer. The recipes give some interesting ideas for food combinations. Eating a healthy balanced diet when undergoing cancer treatment is often difficult, so it could provide some tips and hints for dealing with dietary issues during this time and during recovery.

The recipes look easy to follow and there are some interesting recipes and suggestions for reducing the fat content of some “old favourites” such as macaroni cheese. However, it is American so some of the ingredients are unfamiliar and probably not available here other than in specialist shops. The measurements are in cups and there is no conversion chart to help those outside the USA.

The use of unfamiliar ingredients and American measuring are annoying and, to be honest, would put me off trying some of the recipes. I would have preferred more pictures of the finished recipes as I tend to eat with my eyes when I am choosing something new to try out. Some of the recipes are high in sugar and I would like some suggestions for alternative, healthier ways to add sweetness.

This book would probably be OK for someone trying to find out about healthy eating from scratch. It is generally an easy read apart from the American cooking terms and measures and is visually appealing with nice bright colour photographs and clear text. However, there are better sources of this sort of information freely available elsewhere, e.g. on the internet and from established cancer support centres such as the Penny Brohn Cancer Centre. It is quite expensive and not good value for money.

Living with womb (endometrial) cancer (56-65) (March 2015)

I was very disappointed with this cookbook. The cover design is lovely as are the photographs of the recipes, but if you are following a recipe the book will not stay open. The recipes are not appealing and I would have to change many ingredients to cook them. I listed 15 items that I hadn't heard of and could not find in Waitrose.

The information up to page 83 is interesting but based on the US health service and I think people in the UK would get frustrated at some of the information. For example: the ‘Helpful websites’ (p. 63) are all American; Exploring Resources (p. 62) lists an organisation called ‘Cancer Lifeline’ – people my age group may not know that this is a US number and be left with a hefty bill; on page 170 (Herb roasted chicken), the reader is told to wash the chicken and dry with paper towels. In the UK, we are told not to wash chicken. It might appeal to the younger generation but it's not for me.

Living without my bowel cancer (66-75) (March 2015)

Although this book is called “The cancer wellness cookbook” its messages are relevant to anyone that wants to follow a non-red-meat lifestyle. It is nicely presented with well-taken colour photos illustrating the recipes and a glossy paper appropriate for a book that will spend its life in the kitchen.

It is a book of two halves. The first 70 pages (written in an easy explanatory style) have lots of useful information about diet: adjusting your favourite meals to make them healthier; understanding super foods, pleasingly all available at my local supermarket. It is this that is most useful, not just to cancer patients but anyone that wants to understand how to build a healthy diet. The guidance on making existing meals healthier is relevant to all. As you gain confidence in healthy cooking, explore further with the suggested meals.

The second part is some 90 recipes, from breakfast to dinner with snacks in between. The recipes follow the usual style and I like how the book highlights additional points/tips in a green box. However, not many dishes attracted the interest of my family. The tomato and basil soup (p. 122) went down well – although deemed not as good as my 11-year-old daughter's, who is now doing cookery at secondary school – but illustrated several problems that these recipes have for a UK user. You may have to Google some of the ingredients, e.g. nori is Japanese for edible seafood and not on the shelf at Morrison's. My wife (top cook) didn't recognise, amongst others: baby bok choy or fresh cilantro. There is also scope for error: for example, tomato sauce has a different meaning this side of the Atlantic.

One of its problems is the number of servings, generally eight. Some ingredients are easy to scale back but not if it's 1/2 a teaspoon for 16 servings. It would be much improved if recipes were based around a smaller number of servings. Whilst the super foods mentioned are available at my supermarket, quite a few others are not so you may have to use specialty food stores, pushing up costs. That said, red meat/beef is a more expensive meat than say chicken, so money is saved by deleting red meat from recipes. I might recommend it to a keen cook.

In remission for a grade 4 Glioblastoma multiforme (56-65) (January 2015)



This has some helpful nutritional tips on managing diet and coping with the side-effects of chemotherapy, such as nausea and constipation. I like the look of the book, and the size and the illustrations are good, particularly the cover. I particularly like the introduction, which focuses on some side-effects of chemotherapy and how to cook and eat/drink to alleviate them. I also valued the common-sense statements at the beginning, which state that users should not expect diet to provide a cure but merely to aid good health and good digestion, which is important in managing cancer.

However, it is only suitable for US citizens. The recipes aren't easy to follow because ingredients are listed in cups or ounces. The instructions are clear but many ingredients are in American English and need to be translated or may be available only from specialist stores. It would generally be a challenge to the British public.

The introductory chapters are well written and referenced but there is little of relevance for the UK readership as websites, help lines and organisations are all based in the US. The tone of the author is sympathetic but I felt it sometimes stated the obvious re organic food and proportion of meat to vegetables and fruit that may be more appropriate to the US market.

I really dislike the American spelling and the weights and measures in cups and ounces, which are not used in Britain, and feel that the book should have been edited and partially rewritten for the UK market. Attention needs to focus on the choice of recipes in the book. Generally, people on chemotherapy are likely to prefer familiar menus and about half are entirely alien to the UK taste. The idea of a burrito or muffin for breakfast is off-putting at the best of times, let alone if someone feels ill.

I also dislike the inconsistencies. For instance, nutritional information is given in grams, yet ingredient weights and measures are in cups and ounces. The introduction states that processed meats, such as bacon should be avoided, and yet two of the recipes use this product: black-eye pea and ham soup, and recipes using ground turkey and turkey bacon. I'm also surprised to see so many references to tinned tomatoes where a fresh one would do.

I like the concept of this book with its detailed information on diet, nutrition, super foods, and achieving a balanced diet whilst managing the side-effects of chemotherapy. It also gives a useful tip to ask friends/family to help with cooking. (A useful addition would have been a week's shopping list to prepare some of the recipes.) Apart from that, the book is inappropriate for the British market because the references and links to the helpline, organisations and research are in the US. The advice on what to eat in a fast-food restaurant is risible. Surely the message is not to eat in fast-food restaurants if you wish to eat well.

If you're feeling poorly the last thing you would want to do is to take on a food challenge, either sourcing ingredients, trying new flavours, struggling with foreign weights and measures, or radical changes to the normal diet.

Living with incurable ovarian cancer (56-65) (February 2015)

Further information

Why does Macmillan Cancer Support review books?

We use reviews to help us compile a list of suggested cancer books, the [Macmillan Core Book List](#). Cancer information centres and public libraries can use this list to select appropriate and relevant books for people affected by cancer.

We add reviews to the [Directory of information materials for people affected by cancer](#) so that people affected by cancer can see what others in a similar situation think about a book. You can also see details of all the books reviewed in the [Book reviews listing](#), which also has links to all the reviews.

We recruit most of our reviewers through the [Volunteering Village](#) and the [Cancer Voices Network](#), people affected by cancer who have signed up to help Macmillan Cancer Support in a number of ways. Volunteers are a vital part of our book review process; since 2007, over 1,500 Macmillan volunteers have written more than 6,000 reviews of over 500 different books.

If you are a health professional who would like to review books for us, please [email Sue Hawkins](#), Information Materials Researcher, Macmillan Cancer Support.

Information and support for people affected by cancer

If you are looking for support to help you live life with cancer, you may wish to contact one of [Macmillan's cancer information and support services](#). Or you can call the Macmillan Support Line free on **0808 808 00 00** (Mon-Fri 9am–8pm). We have an interpreting service in over 200 languages. Just state, in English, the language you wish to use. If you are deaf or hard of hearing you can use textphone no 0808 808 0121 or Text Relay.

You can also email us using the [website enquiry form](#). Alternatively, [visit our website](#).

Feedback

If you have any comments, please [email Sue Hawkins](#), Information Materials Researcher, Macmillan Cancer Support.

Being told ‘you have cancer’ can affect so much more than your health – it can also affect your family, your job, even your ability to pay the bills. But you’re still you. We get that. And, after over 100 years of helping people through cancer, we get what’s most important: that you’re treated as a person, not just a patient.

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We’re here to help you find your best way through from the moment of diagnosis, so you’re able to live life as fully as you can. For information, support or just someone to talk to, call 0808 808 00 00 or visit macmillan.org.uk

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