

C.H.E.F.S.

Cooking, Healthy Eating, and Food Strategies

A program offered as part of the Nutrition Education Program at CSC

"No single food or food component can protect you against cancer by itself. But strong evidence does show that a diet filled with a variety of plant foods such as vegetables, fruits, whole grains and beans helps lower risk for many cancers."¹

Maintaining healthy eating habits is often difficult for people with cancer. The C.H.E.F.S. Program offered at CSC can make sustained behavior change possible and improve the lives of clients by increasing their intake of the cancer-fighting foods that promote cancer survival and prevention.

The potent anti-cancer benefit of a diet rich in fruits and vegetables is due to the complex mixture of phytochemicals present in whole foods, not in the individual phytochemicals alone.² C.H.E.F.S. cooking classes focus on the preparation of whole, plant-based foods while explaining the evidence that supports their cancer-fighting properties. C.H.E.F.S. was designed using health behavior theory as a framework, understanding that improving knowledge, confidence, and food skills can facilitate behavior change. This approach is consistent with the current trend in public health to provide evidence-based interventions. ³ Figure 1 illustrates evidence-based behavior theory as it applies to the behavior change [increased intake of cancer-fighting foods] associated with the C.H.E.F.S. program.

C.H.E.F.S. cooking classes arm clients of CSC with knowledge, confidence, and skills through thoughtfully prepared evidence-based lectures and cooking demonstrations. Focusing on AICR's "Foods That Fight Cancer"¹, these cooking demonstrations present a variety of simply prepared whole food, plant-based dishes with the goal that attendees will feel empowered to make positive dietary changes.

Self-efficacy is the most important personal factor to facilitating health behavior change;⁴ it is therefore important to employ a variety of strategies to encourage its development. Through observational learning in the C.H.E.F.S. program, attendees can model the preparation of cancer-fighting foods. Sampling of the prepared food further supports the clients' efforts to increase intake of whole, plant-based foods. Also, providing resource lists and suggestions for creation of a "Cancer-Fighting Kitchen" allow participants to create a home environment conducive to behavior change. Finally, coordinating program delivery with CSC staff and client families provides additional social support to individuals in their pursuit of health.

Projected cost of the program:

The estimated cost for this program consisting of four classes is \$XXXXX per year. Costs per session include:

- Program materials/Handouts/
Educational Materials
 - Food
 - Compostable Paper Goods
 - Training of Food Educators/
Chefs/Volunteers
on AICR Guidelines
 - Fee for Nutrition Educators
 - Facilities
 - Staff - planning, supervision, leadership
 - Marketing and outreach
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Total per session
Total per year [4 sessions]

Marketing and Recruitment:

- Program to be listed on the CSC program calendar
- Information displayed at oncologists offices and hospital cancer center within the six-county area [Somerset, Morris, Union, Hunterdon, Middlesex, and Mercer counties].
- Press releases and articles in print media
- Social media outlets
- Word of mouth from previous participants
- Referrals from physicians and cancer-related social service agencies

Measurement and Evaluation:

- Standardized evaluation administered at beginning and end of program.
- Ongoing program evaluation by program staff
- Participation by staff and Board of Trustees in a Quality Assurance program overseen by the National office that included an on-site visit, governance and program evaluation, and peer review.

Sponsor Acknowledgement:

The program will bear the Program Sponsor's name in all marketing material, on the program, calendar, on the website, and in the annual report.

References:

1. American Institute of Cancer Research [AICR], [2013]. *Foods That Fight Cancer*. Retrieved from <http://www.aicr.org/foods-that-fight-cancer/>
2. Lui, R.H. [December 6, 2010]. Potential Synergy of Phytochemicals in Cancer Prevention: Mechanisms of Action. *The Journal of Nutrition*. Retrieved from http://www.lynneshealth.com/resources/Cancer/3_nutrition%20effects%20on%20cancer.pdf
3. U.S. Department of Health and Human Service: National Cancer Institute. [2005]. *Theory at a Glance, A Guide for Health Promotion Practice*. NIH Publication No. 05-3896; p. 5. Washington, D.C.
4. Bandura, A. [2005]. *Social Functions of Thought and Action: A Social Cognitive Theory*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall