

New study investigates use of soy-rich diet for preventing chronic pain after breast cancer surgery

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(PhysOrg.com) -- A breakthrough study focusing on the benefits of soy in the prevention of chronic pain after breast cancer surgery has been launched by researchers at the Alan Edwards Pain Management Unit of the McGill University Health Centre (MUHC) and McGill University.

The potential health benefits associated with a soy-rich diet have been a source of interest and debate for many years. Several studies have hinted at its great potential for relieving post-traumatic and osteopathic pain. Now, a breakthrough study, focusing on the benefits of soy in the prevention of [chronic pain](#) after [breast cancer](#) surgery, has been launched by researchers at the Alan Edwards Pain Management Unit of the McGill University Health Centre (MUHC) and McGill University.

“If we can demonstrate that a soy-rich pre-surgery diet, is both safe and effective for the prevention of chronic post-surgical pain, the clinical implications will be significant and could help many women around the world,” explains Dr. Yoram Shir, principal investigator of the study and Director of the MUHC Alan Edwards Pain Management Unit, who is also a Professor of Anesthesia and Edwards Chair in Clinical Pain at McGill University.

Chronic pain after [breast cancer surgery](#) is the most common cause for long-term morbidity in women diagnosed with breast cancer, with an incidence that can be higher than 50%. This pain can be resistant to

treatment and last for years, burdening women with its physical, emotional and social consequences. This new National Institutes of Health-funded study will determine if a diet enriched with soy protein, consumed by women for two weeks prior to surgery, could prevent the development of chronic pain. "If shown to be efficacious, this would be a natural and safe preventive treatment that is easily incorporated into the everyday diet," says Dr. Shir. Our daily [diet](#) can also be enriched with [soy protein](#) through shelf products like tofu and soy milk.

There is currently no proven effective method for the prevention of chronic postoperative pain," explains Dr. Shir. "Measures such as pain-relieving medications, commonly used to relieve acute pain after surgery, are largely ineffective in preventing acute post-surgical pain from becoming chronic." Over 22,000 new cases of breast cancer in women are diagnosed each year in Canada and 6,000 in Quebec; most will undergo surgery as part of their comprehensive cancer therapy.

More information: www.clinicaltrials.gov/ct2/show/study?term=soy-rich+diet&rank=1

Provided by McGill University

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