



## Lady of America Newsletter – April 2010 – Power-Up Your Health

### Eating: Good Health at Any Age

Science continues to make great strides in discovering how we can reverse or slow the effects of aging and disease. Experts agree it is important to eat for optimal energy, regardless if you are 20 or 60. That means eating smartly.



For the past several years nutritionists have been touting the benefits of “superfoods” because they are rich in essential fatty acids (EFAs), antioxidants and/or fiber and are said to provide multiple disease-fighting nutrients, fill you up and are easy to include in everyday meals. On the list: berries, nuts, omega 3-rich seafood, soy, fiber, spinach, oats, turkey, oranges, green tea, calcium and dark chocolate. Now, new research suggests there is even more we can do to achieve even better results.

Let's take a look at some of the latest findings:

- ❖ According to Science Daily, the combination of nutrients you eat may have more of an affect on lifespan and fertility than the amount of food you consume. Past studies showed that calorie restriction may increase lifespan, but it also decreased fertility. A new study, published in the Dec. 3 issue of the journal, Nature, reports on a study using fruit flies. This study indicates that fruit flies that were fed their typical diet of yeast, sugar and water showed differences in their lifespan and fertility depending on the amount of different vitamins, lipids and amino acids in the mixture. Methionine, an amino acid, appeared to have a particularly strong link to boosting fertility and lifespan. Researchers believe that this study may indicate a benefit to balancing proteins in the diet rather than restricting calories. This information is particularly beneficial for people who follow a high protein diet or supplement with protein shakes.
- ❖ Flaxseed continues to marvel researchers as a “miracle” food that helps protect against cancer and heart disease. Rich in lignans, flaxseed has also proven to lower cholesterol and reverse kidney damage caused by Lupus.
- ❖ The beta carotene in sweet potatoes helps combat rough, scaly winter skin and may protect against UV damage, too.
- ❖ vitamin D may help reduce the risk of dying from a stroke by as much as 50%. A Finnish study that followed about 6,000 people for more than 25 years showed that those with the highest vitamin D intake were significantly less likely to die of either stroke or heart disease, compared with the people with the lowest intake. How much? Dr. Oz suggests anyone 60 or younger get 1,000 IU per day; 1,200 IU daily if over 60 years of age.

Sources: sunlight, food and a supplement.

- ❖ People eating roughly 25 ounces of chickpeas per week — a little more than 3 ounces a day saw their total cholesterol and LDL levels decrease and healthy HDL levels increase compared to 4 weeks on a chickpea-free diet. That's not all: Their insulin levels also improved. Think hummus, salads and pasta dishes.
- ❖ A new animal study by the University of Western Ontario has shown that eating citrus fruits like oranges and grapefruit may promote weight loss due to the flavonoid naringenin found in the fruit. The research showed that supplementing a high-fat diet with naringenin corrected the elevations in triglyceride and cholesterol, prevented the development of insulin resistance and completely normalized glucose metabolism.
- ❖ The editors of Prevention magazine have created what they call a breakthrough plan to lose belly fat, help prevent disease and turbo-charge your energy. The Flat Belly Diet involves eating four 400-calorie meals that include a MUFA, or monounsaturated fatty acids. The plan breaks the MUFAs into five categories: oils, olives, nuts and seeds, avocado, dark chocolate. The before/after photos are amazing!
- ❖ According to an article in Prevention magazine's December 2009 issue, a British study found that rats fed a diet of 55% total fat experienced a 50% drop in exercise stamina and significant short-term memory loss in as little as 9 days compared with rats fed a low-fat diet. According to the magazine, "a high-fat hangover reduces heart and muscle efficiency." The magazine suggests that we eat for maximum energy, keeping fat intake between 20 and 35% of total daily calories — about 35 to 62 g of fat — with most coming from the monounsaturated fatty acids found in fish, nuts and seeds.
- ❖ A diet that incorporates a daily dose of pistachios may help reduce the risk of lung cancer and other cancers, according to data presented at the American Association for Cancer Research Frontiers in Cancer Prevention Research Conference. "It is known that vitamin E provides a degree of protection against certain forms of cancer. Higher intakes of gamma-tocopherol, which is a form of vitamin E, may reduce the risk of lung cancer," said Ladia M. Hernandez, M.S., R.D., L.D., senior research dietitian in the Department of Epidemiology at the University of Texas M. D. Anderson Cancer Center. "Pistachios are a good source of gamma-tocopherol. Eating them increases intake of gamma-tocopherol, so pistachios may help to decrease lung cancer risk," she said.
- ❖ A new study finds that compounds derived from the spices turmeric and pepper could help prevent breast cancer by limiting the growth of stem cells, the small number of cells that fuel a tumor's growth. Researchers at the University of Michigan Comprehensive Cancer Center have found that when the dietary compounds curcumin, which is derived from the Indian spice turmeric, and piperine, derived from black peppers, were applied to breast cells in culture, they decreased the number of stem cells while having no effect on normal differentiated cells.
- ❖ Fatty food can weaken the immune system. According to a thesis from the Sahlgrenska Academy, mice fed a lard-based diet over a long period of time had a harder time fighting bacteria in the blood. The mice derived 60% of their total calories from fat while compared to mice fed a low-fat diet of no more than 10% of their calories coming from fat. As expected, the mice on the high-fat diet gained weight. Even more surprising was

that their immune system was less active. According to the researchers, their white blood cells were not able to deal with bacteria in the blood, which could have contributed to many dying of sepsis. "Obesity is usually associated with inflammation that does not result from an infection, which simply means that the immune defenses are activated unnecessarily," said doctoral student Louise Strandberg, who wrote the thesis. "Ironically, the mice on the high-fat diet seem to have a less active immune system."

- ❖ New research from the British Psychological Society suggests that cocoa flavanols — abundant in dark chocolate — may keep the brain alert by increasing blood flow. According to the study, when adults consumed a drink containing cocoa flavanols, they reported less mental fatigue. Another study showed that dark chocolate is also a mood booster. So next time you crave sweets or are feeling a little down, try some dark chocolate hot cocoa or nibble on an ounce of dark chocolate containing a minimum of 72% cocoa.
- ❖ Studies continue to show that lycopene — found in tomatoes — and vitamin C can dramatically reduce the risk of cancer and heart disease.
- ❖ Basil can deactivate cancer-causing substances that enter the body while foods rich in vitamin C — oranges, cantaloupe, broccoli, strawberries, peppers — can help relieve arthritis pain.
- ❖ A survey by Prevention magazine reported that "67% of readers who ate cherries for gout enjoyed good results."
- ❖ Celery can help lower blood pressure. Rich in apigenin and 3-n-butylphthalide, celery relaxes the arteries that regulate blood pressure, allowing the vessels to dilate. In addition, celery has been proven to reduce stress hormones in the blood, a major cause of high blood pressure.
- ❖ A five-year study conducted at Cornell University and the University of Arizona showed that 200 micrograms of selenium daily — the amount in two unshelled Brazil nuts — resulted in 63% fewer prostate tumors, 58% fewer colorectal cancers, 46% fewer lung malignancies and a 39% overall decrease in cancer deaths.
- ❖ A University of California at Berkeley study reveals that taking a 1,000-mg. of vitamin C daily can lower CRP (C-reactive protein) levels by 24% — enough to cut joint and tissue inflammation in half and lower heart-disease risk by 20%.
- ❖ A study out of the University of Athens in Greece reveals that people who use extra-virgin olive oil daily have CRP levels 20% lower than those who cook with other oils or fats.
- ❖ Do you have heartburn? A recent study suggests pectin can stop heartburn for 64% of patients. Pectin — a soluble fiber found in fruit — makes an acid-neutralizing foam that lasts up to 5 hours. According to a report in Woman's World magazine, "the foam rises to the surface of the stomach, creating a lid that keeps acid from traveling upward."

- ❖ Researchers at the Harvard School of Public Health say that drinking coffee may help reduce the risk of developing Type 2 diabetes. The researches found that the more coffee consumed, the lower the risk. Drinking four cups a day showed a 30% lower risk.

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