



Natural Insights for Well Being™

HOW TO HAVE A HEALTHY HEART

It's a lovely sentiment to give heart-shaped valentines and candies to friends and loved ones through the first half of February. Hearts are indeed an appropriate symbol for the month that celebrates Heart Health. With heart disease the leading cause of death and disability among North Americans, there is no better month to learn how to prevent cardiovascular illness.

The heart is a powerful muscle, about the size of your fist. It is responsible for pumping blood to the entire body. In a healthy adult, the body contains about 2 gallons (5 liters) of blood that is circulated over and over through the body.

The blood moves from the heart, into arteries, capillaries, and veins before returning to the heart. The entire cycle takes about 60 seconds, during which time the blood carries oxygen and nutrients to all the cells in the body.

Get Moving

To keep this muscle hardy and strong, it needs to be stimulated, just like other muscles in our bodies do. Physical inactivity is a major risk factor for cardiovascular disease, and most adults are not physically active enough to gain any health benefits.

Swimming, cycling, jogging, skiing, aerobic dancing, walking or many other activities can help your heart. Whether it's included in a structured exercise program or part of your daily routine, all physical activity adds up to a healthier heart.

According to the latest joint American Heart Association/American College of Sports Medicine guidelines on physical activity, all healthy adults ages 18-65 should be getting at least 30 minutes



of moderate intensity activity five days of the week.

However, there are additional guidelines for those 65 and older, or for those 50-64 with chronic conditions or physical functional limitations (e.g., arthritis) that affect movement ability or physical fitness.

An Ounce of Prevention

Know your blood pressure. Your heart moves blood through your body. If it is hard for your heart to do this, your heart works harder, and your blood pressure will rise. People with high blood pressure often have no symptoms, so have your blood pressure checked every 1 to 2 years. If you have high blood pressure, your doctor may suggest you make some lifestyle changes, such as eating less and exercising more. Your doctor may also prescribe medicine to help lower your blood pressure.

Healthy Insight

Chocolate Hearts

Doctors in a chocolate study noted earlier positive findings for the antioxidant polyphenols in cocoa, and wanted to see how chocolate might affect life after a heart attack. Over 1,100 people hospitalized with their first heart attack reported the chocolate they had consumed in the past year. Eight years later, compared to those who did not eat chocolate, those who ate chocolate less than once per week were 27 percent less likely to have died from a heart attack; once per week, 44 percent less likely; and twice or more per week, 66 percent less likely. Researchers believe that cocoa supports heart health by helping to relax blood vessels, lower blood pressure and reduce inflammation.

Reference: Journal of Internal Medicine; 2009, Vol. 266, No. 3, 248-57

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Warning Signs

Often heart disease has no symptoms but there are sometimes warning signs when a heart attack is pending. Many heart attacks cause completely different sensations. The signs listed here are common, but by no means are they the only possible indications of a heart attack is in progress.

Here are some of the common symptoms:

- Uncomfortable pressure, fullness, squeezing, or pain in the center of the chest that lasts more than a few minutes, or goes away and comes back again.
- Pain that spreads to the shoulders, neck, or arms. The arm may be tingling or numb.
- Chest discomfort with lightheadedness, fainting, sweating, nausea, or shortness of breath.
- Nausea, vomiting
- Cold sweats, shortness of breath and lightheadedness

- Feeling of indigestion
- Dizziness, weakness, and fainting
- Abdominal pain

Very few pre-menopausal women have heart attacks, unless they smoke, have diabetes, or are on birth control pills for a long period of time. Some additional warning signs for women include:

- Breathlessness with exertion or especially if it wakes you up at night
- Chest discomfort that starts behind the breast bone and radiates to either shoulder or arm, neck, or to the lower (but not upper) jaw
- Discomfort in the lower jaw especially if it occurs only with exertion or will not go away

What to Do in a Heart Emergency

If you believe you are experiencing a heart attack or stroke, call 911 or contact your emergency response system immediately. If you are with

someone who is experiencing these symptoms and cannot reach 911, drive them to the hospital immediately. If you are experiencing the symptoms yourself, have someone else drive you.

Expect a “denial.” It’s normal for someone with chest pain to deny that it could be a heart attack. Don’t take “no” for an answer. Insist on taking prompt action. Give CPR if it’s necessary and you are properly trained.

Cross Your Heart

Remember when you were a little kid and cemented a promise by crossing your heart? You can update that childhood fun by making a pledge to take good care of your heart health. And that’s a very loving Valentine you can give to yourself. ❤️

PROTECTING THE COLON

Everyday nutrients may extend life and cut chances of colorectal cancer

People with colorectal cancer (CRC) lived longer when vitamin D levels were higher and those with higher levels of quercetin or vitamin B6 were less likely to have CRC, according to three new studies.

Doctors in a vitamin D study said that earlier findings showed people with low vitamin D levels were more likely to have CRC, and wanted to see if vitamin D levels could predict survival after diagnosis. Researchers estimated vitamin D levels—from sun exposure, diet, supplements, skin type, and body mass index—in more than 1,000 people at the time they were diagnosed with CRC. Over 18 years of follow up, those with higher vitamin D scores were half as likely to die from the disease as were those with lower vitamin D scores.



Doctors in a CRC study believe that flavonoids—the antioxidants in plants, fruits, vegetables, and tea—reduce the chances of CRC. Researchers explained that CRC rates are high in England, and set out to measure flavonoids in the English diet. Englishmen and women get most of their f

lavonoids from drinking tea, so scientists measured non-tea flavonoids in the diets of 264 people with CRC plus 408 healthy participants. Those whose diets had the highest levels of the flavonoid quercetin from non-tea sources were 40 percent less likely to have CRC than those with the lowest quercetin levels.

In a vitamin B study, scientists measured blood levels of B vitamins in over 200 people with CRC and also in more than 400 healthy people of similar age, sex, and ethnicity. As blood levels of the active form of vitamin B6 (pyridoxal-5'-phosphate) fell, chances of CRC rose, and those with the lowest levels of vitamin B6 were 51 percent more likely to have CRC than were those with the highest vitamin B6 levels.

Reference: British Journal of Cancer; 2009, Vol. 101, No. 6, 916-23

DOING BETTER IN DAY CARE AND IN SCHOOL

Nutrients and diet improved kids' health and scholastic performance

Probiotics helped kids in day care avoid respiratory infections, prebiotics helped adolescent girls absorb minerals, and kids who ate a healthy diet performed better in school tests, three new studies reveal.

Doctors in an infection study gave about 300 children in day care Lactobacillus GG in 3 ounces of milk per day, or a placebo. After three months, kids who took Lactobacillus were 34 percent less likely to have an upper respiratory tract infection, and symptoms cleared up faster, compared to placebo. Doctors said probiotics work in the gut, the immune system's first line of defense against infection.

In a prebiotics study, doctors explained that adolescent girls often do not get enough calcium or magnesium—important for healthy bones—and thought that prebiotics



might increase the amount of minerals the body would absorb. Researchers gave 14 adolescent girls with low calcium in the diet, 7 grams of fructo-oligosaccharides (FOS) per day, or a placebo. After 36 days, girls in the FOS group were able to absorb 18 percent more magnesium compared to placebo. The amount of calcium the girls absorbed did not change, which doctors said was because calcium was so low the body had already absorbed it all.

In a diet quality study, researchers wanted to see how diet might affect school performance. Doctors tracked the height, weight, and socioeconomic status of about 4,600 fifth grade students, and measured the quality of their diets. The students took a literacy test that included reading stories and information texts and writing answers to questions. After adjusting for income, age, education, school, and sex, students whose diets included more fruit and vegetables and fewer calories from fat were 41 percent less likely to fail the test.

Reference: Clinical Nutrition; November, 2009, Electronic Prepublication

HEALTHY MOMS HAVE HEALTHIER KIDS

Everyday nutrients may extend life and cut chances of colorectal cancer

Kids whose moms took folic acid while pregnant had better mental health, kids whose moms had good choline levels avoided birth defects, and pregnant moms who took carnitine maintained healthy levels, in three new studies.

Doctors in a child behavior study knew that mothers' low folate levels can cause brain and spinal cord defects in babies, but wanted to see how folic acid supplements might also improve kids' behavior. Researchers measured how much folic acid moms took during the first trimester, then evaluated over 4,200 of their children at 18 months. Kids whose moms did not take folic acid were 44 percent more likely to have developmental and behavioral problems compared to kids whose moms took folic acid.

Researchers in a birth defect study noted that folate is only part of the solution to birth defects, which occur even though U.S. manufacturers must add folic acid to foods. Doctors took blood samples from 180,000 pregnant California women and identified 80 whose children were born with birth defects. Scientists compared these samples with over 400 random samples from mothers whose kids did not have birth defects and found that moms with higher levels of one essential nutrient—choline—were much more likely to have kids without brain and spinal cord defects than were moms with low choline levels.

In a carnitine study, doctors said that nearly every cell in the body contains this energy-producing amino acid. The body uses iron to synthesize carnitine, but pregnant women may not have enough iron to do



so. Researchers gave 26 healthy pregnant women 500 mg of L-carnitine per day, or a placebo, from the 13th week of pregnancy through birth. At the end of the study, the placebo group had lost both carnitine and iron while those in the carnitine group had maintained good carnitine levels.

Reference: British Journal of Nutrition; 2009, 1-8, Electronic Prepublication

Local News:

I Scream, You Scream, We all Scream



Now that I have your attention, let me tell you about my gelato (ice cream in Italian). It is richer, denser than traditional (think Breyer's) ice cream, with half the fat, sugar and calories.

That I make it from goat milk should interest, not only the lactose intolerant, but anyone into healthy nutrition. Oprah did a show (11/25/8) on the Blue Zones (author: Dan Buettner), places in the world with great longevity and vitality. One of them

is in Sardinia where people drink wine, water and goat milk (separately I hope) and eat goat cheese. Goat milk and cheese are high in omega 3's and medium chain triglycerides; both help prevent Alzheimer's and heart disease. Small molecules – that's why the lactose is tolerable and why goat milk is more nutritious, easier to digest.

Sorry for the interruption, back to my gelato:

First the milk. I get it from an Amish farmer in Lancaster County (who would be organic could he afford certification). Their diet's all-vegetarian with sweet hay and are pastured most of the year. Veterinary care is homeopathic, unless they're very sick. They are pulled from the herd and given antibiotics. Once clear of disease and antibiotics they return. Breeds are Alpine,

Nubian and Sonnen and they have names: Mabel, Lois, Gretchen... Mabel's funny, Lois aggressive, Gretchen very cute. They seem quite happy (well maybe not Lois).

My ingredients are all-natural, no artificial colors or flavors and no preservatives. My sugars (Evaporated Cane Juice and Agave Syrup) are organic and unrefined, even my cocoa's non-dutched.

I make my gelato in Kennett Square (no mushroom gelato) and the biscotti for the Biscotti & Crema comes from Gilda's Biscotti of Salem, NJ.

Oh, did I mention my gelato has half the fat, sugar and calories?

By Bob Bada, Ice Cream Chef
www.gelatidicapri.com

WOMEN'S HEART HEALTH

Women with more lycopene had healthier blood vessels, postmenopausal women with higher folate levels had lower blood pressure, and premenopausal women deficient in vitamin D developed high blood pressure later in life, three new studies reveal.

Doctors in a lycopene study said that atherosclerosis—when coronary arteries narrow and stiffen, leading to heart disease—begins with inflamed blood vessels, and wanted to see if lycopene levels could predict blood vessel health. Researchers measured lycopene levels in over 250 healthy women, aged 31 to 75, and found that women with higher lycopene had more flexible blood vessels than those with lower levels, and LDL cholesterol levels were about 16 percent lower, and C-reactive protein levels—a sign of inflammation—were 37 percent lower.

In a folate study, researchers gave postmenopausal women 15 mg of the active form of folic acid (5-methyltetrahydrofolate, or 5-MTHF) per day, or a placebo. After three weeks, while there were no effects for placebo, those in the 5-MTHF group had significantly lower systolic and diastolic blood pressure, lower homocysteine levels—a sign of inflammation—and less insulin resistance.

In a blood pressure study, doctors wanted to see if premenopausal vitamin D levels could predict high blood pressure later in life. Researchers took annual blood pressure readings from over 550 premenopausal women over the course of 15 years. At the start of the study, 2 percent of the women had been diagnosed with high blood pressure, and researchers discovered another 4 percent who had not been diagnosed. By the end of the study, another 19 percent of the women had developed high blood

pressure, for a total of 25 percent. Women who were deficient in vitamin D at the start of the study were three times more likely to develop high blood pressure later in life as were those with normal vitamin D levels.

Reference: Atherosclerosis; 2009, Electronic pre-publication



Martindale's Manager Continues Blogging



Hello to all. You may not know me but my name is Joan and I am Martindale's store manager. I have worked here for 13 years and been the store manager for four and a half. My work usually keeps me in the backroom but I do spend time in our vitamin aisle assisting customers as much as I am able. The following is my story which began in April of 2009. I would like to share it with whomever is interested in the hope that it will help as many people as possible. You can find my blog at, joanmp-joan.blogspot.com

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Questions about nutrition or natural products?

Please address to the Editor at Martindale's Natural Market. A few will be selected for our staff to answer and will be published in the next issue. Unfortunately we cannot acknowledge receipt of your questions. Submission of questions grants us permission to site your name unless you state otherwise. As always, all articles in this newsletter are solely for educational purposes and not intended to diagnose or cure health conditions.

Address questions/comments to: Debbie Formica, Editor

EditorDebbie@gmail.com.

Thanks for shopping with us!

Valentine's Day Chocolate Dippers

Making this delectable dark chocolate treat is almost as much fun as eating it. Please see page 1 for new research on how chocolate may protect the heart.



Ingredients:

1 1/4 c raw cocoa powder
1 c + 3 tbsp agave nectar
1/4 c organic coconut oil
1/8 tsp salt
1 lb your choice of fresh strawberries,
bananas, Clementine tangerine wedges,
or dried apricots Parchment paper

Directions:

In a small bowl, mix together the raw cocoa powder, agave nectar, oil and salt until combined and smooth. Place in the refrigerator to chill for 10 minutes. Line a large plate with parchment. Slice bananas into bite-size chunks. Hold one piece of fruit at a time; dip one end into the raw cocoa mixture and place on the parchment. Put the plate in the freezer for 10 minutes before serving.