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Our September 2010 Newsletter for Healthy Living

Hypertension and Diet

People who eat a diet high in fructose are at increased risk of developing high blood pressure, or hypertension. The results of a recent study suggest that cutting back on foods and beverages high in fructose might decrease your risk of developing hypertension. Hypertension is a major risk factor for heart and kidney diseases. An increase in the general consumption of fructose, which is used to sweeten a wide variety of processed foods, has occurred at the same time as a rise in the prevalence of hypertension.

The study was published July 1, 2010 in the *Journal of the American Society Nephrology (JASN)* online. To examine whether increased fructose consumption has contributed to rising rates of hypertension, Diana Jalal, MD (University of Colorado Denver Health Sciences Center) and her colleagues



analyzed data from the National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey (2003-2006). The study involved 4,528 US adults 18 years of age or older with no prior history of hypertension. Study participants answered questions related to their consumption of foods and beverages such as fruit juices, soft drinks, bakery products, and candy.

Dr. Jalal's team found that people who consumed a diet of 74 grams or more per day of fructose (corresponding

to 2.5 sugary soft drinks per day) had a 26%, 30%, and 77% higher risk for blood pressure levels of 135/85, 140/90, and 160/100 mmHg, respectively. (A normal blood pressure reading is below 120/80 mmHg.) "Our study identifies a potentially modifiable risk factor for high blood pressure. However, well-planned prospective randomized clinical studies need to be completed to see if

140/90 or higher. By 1939, that had risen to 10 percent, and today 31 percent of adults are hypertensive. Scientists suspect that the explanation for this staggering rise is that fructose became a mainstay of our diets. Food and beverage manufacturers began switching their sweeteners from sucrose (table sugar) to corn syrup in the 1970s when they discovered that HFCS was far cheaper to

"The use of high-fructose corn syrup in the U.S. diet increased 10,673 percent between 1970 and 2005."

low fructose diets will prevent the development of hypertension and its complications," said Dr. Jalal.

Hypertension is the most common chronic condition in developed countries and a major risk factor for heart and kidney diseases. Researchers are striving to identify environmental factors that might be responsible for the development of hypertension, and they suspect that fructose may play a role. Dramatic increases in the consumption of this simple sugar, which is used to sweeten a wide variety of processed foods, mirror the significant rise in the prevalence of hypertension. Today nearly one in three adults suffer from high blood pressure (hypertension), a serious health concern that can cause heart disease and increase your risk of having a stroke.

This was not always the case, as hypertension was rare prior to the 20th century. In 1900, only 5 percent of the population had blood pressure of

use in their products. This switch drastically altered the average American diet. HFCS is now found in every type of processed, pre-packaged food you can think of. In fact, the use of HFCS in the U.S. diet increased 10,673 percent between 1970 and 2005, according to the USDA. It now makes up the number one source of calories in America. This is significant because the average American now consumes 70 grams of fructose EVERY day. This is in contrast to 100 years ago when the average intake was about 15 grams and that was mostly in the form of healthy fruits. On average, we are consuming 500% more than we did a century ago!

Glucose and fructose are different types of simple sugars. After they are separated apart and broken down in your body they are metabolized using completely separate pathways. Glucose is utilized by every cell in your body; in fact, your body was designed to use it for energy.

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Bad Habits and Aging

Smoking, drinking too much, and a lack of exercise can age you by 12 years. The findings come from a study that tracked close to 5,000 British adults for 20 years. Over the course of the study, 29 per cent of the people with all four unhealthy behaviors died. Only 8 percent died among the people with none of the four habits.

60s may help give you that added incentive you're looking for. It should be mentioned, too, that those in this unhealthy group were also more likely to die during the study. The most common causes of death? Cancer and heart disease, which are both often related to lifestyle habits.

The people who counted as "healthy"

genetic and free from additives and genetically modified ingredients. What a gift!

The choices you make on a daily basis truly influence just about every disease known to man, and probably more than a handful of those yet to be discovered. They can also make your energy levels rise or plummet, make your mood sunny or dark, and either nourish your body or slowly destroy it. Americans spend dizzying amounts of money on creams, gadgets, surgeries and other magic bullets to look and feel younger. But the reality is that more than any pill or medical "treatment," your lifestyle is what

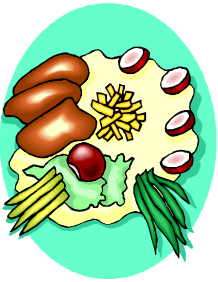
will determine your level of health now and in the years to come. It was the ancient Roman poet Martial, wise beyond his time, who first said: "Life's not just being alive, but being well."

This is still true today, many centuries later. Your health is a gift that cannot be bought, and once it's lost it may be impossible to get back. Start taking steps today, even small ones, to make your lifestyle a little bit healthier. Whether you realize it yet or not, you have at your disposal numerous methods to influence your physical and mental well-being, and ultimately take control of your health.



"Participants were deemed healthy if they consumed fruits and vegetables three times per day."

While these findings don't mean that everyone who maintains a healthy lifestyle will live longer than those who don't, it will increase the odds. The fact that an unhealthy lifestyle can age you prematurely is not exactly earth-shattering news, especially for those shopping organic and local. But there



are two tidbits revealed by this study that just might make your jaw drop to the floor. Eating poorly, not exercising, drinking too much and smoking does not just age you a little bit -- it ages you by more than a decade.

For many, the motivation to live a cleaner life often doesn't occur until a health issue sets in, but the fact that you may be able to pass as being in your late 40s when you're actually in your early

in this study (and were the ones who reaped the benefits of seeming 12 years younger and lowering their death risk) were really just scraping by according to most "health" standards. For example, to be included in the "healthy" category, participants needed to: exercise at least 2-4 hours per week; eat vegetables and fruits three times a day or more (the lead researcher mentioned that consuming one carrot, one apple and a glass of juice would suffice, but this is obviously far less than optimal); not smoke, or have quit smoking; and have fewer than two drinks a day for women, and fewer than three a day for men. These are far from extreme healthy measures. In fact, they are steps that virtually everyone should be able to achieve, especially the first two! Now imagine that you are eating healthy foods on a daily basis, foods that are unprocessed, often raw or only lightly cooked, come from high-quality, local sources, and are grass-fed or or-

Reference: *Archives of Internal Medicine* April 26, 2010;170 (8):711-18

Hypertension and Diet, *continued*

In contrast, fructose breaks down into a variety of waste products that are bad for your body, including uric acid. Fructose is also found naturally in fresh fruits, but these whole fruits contain high amounts of natural antioxidants, as well as other synergistic compounds that may help counter the detrimental effects of fructose. Fructose is emerging as a powerful player in hy-

pertension, so avoiding this pervasive sweetener as much as possible is an important strategy. Another effective way to lower your insulin levels and your blood pressure is through exercise. A regular, effective exercise program



can assist in reducing your insulin levels and your blood pressure. Other lifestyle changes that may assist in lowering high blood pressure are reducing stress, getting enough sunshine and vitamin D, and maintaining the proper balance of high-quality omega-3 fats in your diet.

Reference: "Increased Fructose Associates with Elevated Blood Pressure," online at, July 1, 2010, <http://jasn.asnjournals.org> doi 10.1681/ASN.2009111111

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Omega-3's and Breast Cancer

A recent report adds to the growing evidence that omega-3 supplements may play a role in preventing chronic disease. Researchers asked more than 35,000 postmenopausal women who did not have a history of breast cancer to complete a 24-page



questionnaire about their use of supplements. Regular use of fish oil supplements, which contain high levels of the omega-3 fats EPA and DHA, was linked with a 32 percent reduced risk of breast cancer. Eurekalert reports: *"The reduction in risk appeared to be restricted to invasive ductal breast cancer, the most common type of the disease. The use of other specialty supplements, many of which are commonly taken by women to treat symptoms of menopause, was not associated with breast cancer risk."*

Omega-3 deficiency is a common underlying factor for cancer, and this latest study found that by simply supplementing your diet with animal-based omega-3 fats you may reduce your breast cancer risk by 32 percent. Considering that breast cancer is now one of the most commonly-diagnosed cancers in

genetic mutations. Currently, women with BRCA1 mutations account for about 5 percent of all breast cancer cases.

Omega-3 fats have been found to influence these two genes, while reducing cancer cell growth. In fact, research into the cancer preventive effects of omega-3 first began because it was observed that Inuit Eskimo populations, who eat a diet naturally high in animal-based omega-3 fats, had lower rates of breast and prostate cancers. Today we know that this healthy fat is good for so many aspects of health, it can actually reduce your risk of death from virtually every (disease-related) cause! Animal-based omega-3 deficiency was recently revealed as the sixth biggest killer of Americans, responsible for up to 96,000 premature deaths each year, so increasing your omega-3 intake could very well be a life-saving strategy for many, even above and beyond breast cancer.

The results of three studies published in 2008 also mirrored these results, indicating that low concentrations of EPA and DHA resulted in an increased risk of death from ALL causes, and accelerated cognitive decline. The benefits of omega-3 fats truly run the gamut, from mental and behavioral

will also lower the risk of prostate cancer in men, include:

- ~Optimizing your vitamin D levels through appropriate exposure to sunlight and supplementation.
- ~Controlling your fasting insulin levels and limiting your intake of processed foods.
- ~Eliminating sugar and fructose as much as possible.

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- ~Eating broccoli and cauliflower; sprouts are especially beneficial.
- ~Consuming fresh vegetable juice daily, including tomato (for lycopene).
- ~Getting appropriate amounts of animal-based omega-3 fats and reduce your intake of omega-6.
- ~Consuming a high-quality source of plant-based omega-3 fats, such as freshly-ground flax seeds.
- ~Selenium – 400 mcg per day.
- ~Vitamin E – 400 units per day.
- ~Boiling, poaching or steaming your food, avoiding frying and charbroiling.
- ~Getting appropriate exercise.
- ~Having a tool to permanently erase the neurological short-circuiting that can activate cancer genes. Even the CDC states that most disease is caused by emotions.
- ~Getting enough high-quality sleep.
- ~Reducing your exposure to environmental toxins and heavy metals.
- ~Reducing your exposure to EMF's like cell and portable phones.

Reference: Eurekalert July 8, 2010.
Cancer Epidemiology, Bio-markers and Prevention July 2010(19)
7:1696-708.
International Journal of Cancer March 2002 1;98(1):78-83.
Medical News Today Nov. 11, 2005.
American Journal of Clinical Nutrition Sept. 2008 88(3):595-729

"High levels of Omega-3 supplements was linked with a 32 percent reduced risk of breast cancer."

the world, simple interventions like this one could save countless numbers of lives. While this is the first study to link omega-3 supplementation with a decreased risk of invasive ductal breast cancer, the most common type, it only adds to growing research highlighting the important health benefits of omega-3 fats. Dietary fat intake has been one of the most widely studied dietary risk factors for breast cancer. In 2002, for instance, two studies showed that omega-3 fats influence two genes involved in keeping breast cancer at bay. BRCA1 (breast cancer gene 1) and BRCA2 (breast cancer gene 2) are tumor suppressor genes that, when functioning normally, help repair DNA damage (a process that also prevents tumor development). Earlier research had discovered that women who carry mutated versions of these two genes are at higher risk of developing both breast and ovarian cancer than women who do not have these

health at any age, to preventing premature death from any number of diseases, including: coronary heart disease and stroke; essential fatty acid deficiency in infancy (brain and retinal development); autoimmune disorders; Crohn's disease; cancers of the breast, colon and prostate; mild hypertension, and rheumatoid arthritis.



Optimizing your animal-based omega-3 fat intake is very easy, provided you choose the best source of animal-based omega-3 fats. Ideally you would receive all the animal-based omega-3s you'd need from eating seafood and grass-fed beef, but taking a high-quality supplement is an effective option.

Omega-3 fats are certainly not the only nutrients or strategy that has been linked to a lowered risk of breast cancer. Other important tools, which



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