

As you look through this edition of *healthbites* you will read about the discovery that western diet may be linked to ADHD. Over the page you will find an interesting article on Olive Oil, as well as a vegan recipe for Greek Salad. As usual you will also read some more interesting *littlebites* in the side column.

Western Diet Link to ADHD

ScienceDaily (July 29, 2010) — A new study from Perth's Telethon Institute for Child Health Research shows an association between ADHD and a 'Western-style' diet in adolescents.

The research findings have just been published online in the international Journal of Attention Disorders.

Leader of Nutrition studies at the Institute, Associate Professor Wendy Oddy, said the study examined the dietary patterns of 1800 adolescents from the long-term Raine Study and classified diets into 'Healthy' or 'Western' patterns.

"We found a diet high in the Western pattern of foods was associated with more than double the risk of having an ADHD diagnosis compared with a diet low in the Western pattern, after adjusting for numerous other social and family influences," Dr Oddy said.

"We looked at the dietary patterns amongst the adolescents and compared the diet information against whether or not the adolescent had received a diagnosis of ADHD by the age of 14 years. In our study, 115 adolescents had been diagnosed with ADHD, 91 boys and 24 girls."

A "healthy" pattern is a diet high in fresh fruit and vegetables, whole grains and fish. It tends to be higher in omega-3 fatty acids, folate and fibre. A "Western" pattern is a diet with a trend towards takeaway foods, confectionary, processed, fried and refined foods. These diets tend to be higher in total fat, saturated fat, refined sugar and sodium.

"When we looked at specific foods, having an ADHD diagnosis was associated with a diet high in takeaway foods, processed meats, red meat, high fat dairy products and confectionary," Dr Oddy said.

"We suggest that a Western dietary pattern may indicate the adolescent has a less optimal fatty acid profile, whereas a diet higher in omega-3 fatty acids is thought to hold benefits for mental health and optimal brain function.

"It also may be that the Western dietary pattern doesn't provide enough essential micronutrients that are needed for brain function, particularly attention and concentration, or that a Western diet might contain more colours, flavours and additives that have been linked to an increase in ADHD symptoms. It may also be that impulsivity, which is a characteristic of ADHD, leads to poor dietary choices such as quick snacks when hungry."

Dr Oddy said that whilst this study suggests that diet may be implicated in ADHD, more research is needed to determine the nature of the relationship.

"This is a cross-sectional study so we cannot be sure whether a poor diet leads to ADHD or whether ADHD leads to poor dietary choices and cravings," Dr Oddy said.

ADHD is the most commonly diagnosed childhood mental health disorder and has a prevalence of approximately 5%. ADHD is known to be more common in boys.

—ScienceDaily, July 29, 2010



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healthbites

Issue 25 - October 2010

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little bites

Happiness is in Keeping Busy

ScienceDaily, 29 July 2010

A new study in Psychological Science found that people who have something to do, even something pointless, are happier than people who sit idly.

Music Benefits the Brain

NaturalNews, 30 July 2010

Northwestern University scientists have pulled together a review of research into what music—specifically, learning to play music—does to humans. The result shows music training does far more than allow us to entertain ourselves and others by playing an instrument or singing. Instead, it actually changes our brains. Musical training has a profound impact on other skills including speech and language, memory and attention, and even the ability to convey emotions vocally.

Physical Activity Reduces the Risk of Early Death

ScienceDaily, 25 July 2010

A new study by researchers from the London, Cambridge University and in Sweden has found that even light or moderate intensity physical activity, such as walking or cycling, can substantially reduced the risk of early death.

Does Eating Meat Lead to Weight Gain

NaturalNews, 28 July 2010

According to a recent study out of Europe, eating lots of meat may be contributing to weight gain. Even among people eating roughly the same amount of overall calories, those that eat meat are more likely to weigh more than those who do not.

Eating Nuts 'Reduce Cholesterol'

BBC News, 10 May 2010

US research suggests, a review of 25 studies, showed eating on average 67g of nuts - a small bag - a day reduced cholesterol levels by 7.4%. Loma Linda University team believes nuts may help prevent the absorption of cholesterol.

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Olive Oil Impacts Genes

Scientists discover olive oil impacts genes to halt inflammation.

Research has been steadily accumulating that olive oil has extensive health-protective properties. For example, components of olive oil have been found to be effective against breast cancer and studies suggest the abundance of olive oil in the Mediterranean style of eating may be the reason that diet helps prevent depression. Now scientists have discovered that compounds in olive oil directly repress genes linked to inflammation.

This could be especially important in halting the dangerous effects of metabolic syndrome. Characterized by excess abdominal fat, high cholesterol, high blood pressure and high blood glucose levels, metabolic syndrome is linked to type 2 diabetes, heart disease, and early death.

Research published in the journal BMC Genomics investigated changes in genes mediated by olive oil phenols (which are most abundant in the extra-virgin varieties of olive oil). The study involved 20 research subjects, all with metabolic syndrome. For six weeks, the patients did not take any supplements or drugs and they were all placed on similar low-fat, carbohydrate-rich diets. Then, for breakfast, they ate either a breakfast containing virgin olive oil with a high content of phenolic compounds or a similar breakfast with low phenol content.

The research team took blood samples after the meals to check for the expression of over 15,000 human genes. The results? The high phenol olive oil clearly impacted the regulation of almost 100 genes—many of which have been linked to obesity, high blood fat levels, type 2 diabetes and heart disease.

These findings strengthen the relationship between inflammation, obesity and diet and provide evidence at the most basic level of healthy effects derived from virgin olive oil consumption in humans.

The ability of olive oil's phenolic compounds to reduce or prevent inflammation also provides a molecular basis for the reduction of heart disease observed in Mediterranean countries, where virgin olive oil represents a main source of dietary fat.

—Taken from NaturalNews, July 27, 2010, by S. L.Baker, features writer.



Good Health Naturally

This vegan cookbook has over 170 healthful recipes with new ideas and tasty, yet healthful food. You will also find tips on living a healthier lifestyle, nutritional guides and articles on food safety. Designed for New Zealand ingredients.

100 pages, paperback \$15.00



Recipe of the Month

Greek Salad

An old time vegan favourite. Tofu is used as a substitute for feta cheese.

5 T lemon juice	2 T olive oil
½ t salt	¼ t cayenne pepper
1 t basil	½ t oregano
1 t paprika	1 t miso
1 t maple syrup	1 t Italian seasoning
500g tofu	

Marinate tofu for 1 hour with the above ingredients, stirring occasionally. Then add 3 tomatoes cut into wedges, 3 cucumbers cut in chunks, ½ large red onion in chunks, ½ c olives, 1 celery stick chopped, ½ red capsicum sliced. Toss and serve on a bed of lettuce. —Good Health Naturally, pg 60

