



Preserving Male Health

In 1992 a controversial paper was published suggesting sperm counts have been dropping around the world over the last 50 years. And a recent study of tens of thousands of men studied over a 17-year period indeed found about a 30 percent drop in sperm concentration, as well as a drop in the percentage of normal looking sperm.

Semen quality may actually be related to life expectancy. In a study of more than 40,000 men visiting a sperm lab during a 40-year period, they found that a decrease in mortality was associated with an increase in semen quality, suggesting that semen quality may therefore be a fundamental biomarker of overall male health. Even when defective sperm are capable of fertilizing an egg, creating a child with abnormal sperm may have serious implications for that child's future health.

What role may diet play? A Harvard study suggested that a small increase in saturated fat intake was associated with a substantially lower sperm count, but not all fat was bad. Higher intakes of omega-3's were associated with a more favorable sperm shape. This may help explain why researchers were able to improve sperm vitality, movement, and shape by giving men about 18 walnuts a day for 12 weeks. Walnuts have more than just omega 3's though. They also contain other important micronutrients. In a study of men aged 22 to 80, older men who ate diets containing lots of antioxidants and nutrients such as vitamin C had the genetic integrity of sperm of much younger men.

The antioxidants we eat not only end up in our semen, but are concentrated there. The amount of vitamin C ends up nearly ten times more concentrated in men's testicles than the rest of their bodies. Why? Because sperm are highly susceptible to damage induced by free radicals, and evidence suggests that oxidative stress plays an important role in male infertility. So, more fruits and vegetables and perhaps less meat and dairy.

The Harvard data studied fewer than 100 men, but it was the best we had... until now. A much larger follow-up study, found that the higher the saturated fat intake the lower the sperm count, up to a 65 percent reduction. The changes in diet over the past decades may be part of the explanation for the recently reported high frequency of subnormal human sperm counts.

Why is high dietary intake of saturated fat associated with reduced semen quality? What's the connection? Sex steroid hormones in meat, eggs, and dairy may help explain the link between saturated fat intake and declining sperm counts.

In any case, the current findings suggest that adapting dietary intake toward eating less saturated fat may be beneficial for not only general but also reproductive health.

- Michael Gregor MD, June.14, 2016

*"Our tables
should be supplied with an
abundance of
good fruits,
grains and
vegetables in
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EG White

healthbites

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Shift Work Unwinds Body Clock

ScienceDaily, June 1, 2016

It's not the longer hours—or the weird hours—necessarily that is the problem. Instead, it is the change in the timing of waking, sleeping and eating every few days that "unwinds" our body clocks and makes it difficult for them to maintain their natural, 24-hour cycle. Studies found that shift workers are more prone to numerous health hazards, from heart attacks to obesity and more severe ischemic strokes.

Artificial Sweeteners and Weight Gain

EmaxHealth, June 7, 2016

Artificial sweeteners may indirectly add calories to your diet. These sweeteners are deepening the neural craving pathways lit up by regular sugar, but not fully satisfying the brain's reward system and so artificial sweeteners worsen our cravings for real sugar. Sugar, in turn, triggers a spike in your body's insulin level. And insulin is the real culprit in weight gain and obesity.

Walnuts May Improve Your Colon Health

ScienceDaily, June 2, 2016

Researchers report that eating walnuts may change gut bacteria in a way that suppresses colon cancer and they may also act as a probiotic to make the colon healthy. Walnuts are packed with compounds known to be important nutritionally. They have the most polyunsaturated fatty acids of all the commonly eaten tree nuts, as well as the highest ratio of omega-3 to omega-6 fatty acids, and high levels of Vitamin E with anti-cancer properties.

Cholesterol-lowering Effects in Barley

ScienceDaily, June 8, 2016

Eating barley or foods containing barley reduced levels of two types of "bad cholesterol" associated with cardiovascular risk by seven per cent according to research. It also indicated that barley had similar cholesterol-lowering effects as oats, but barley is higher in fibre, has twice the protein and almost half the calories of oats.

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Healthy Fats in Mediterranean Diet Won't Boost Weight

An eating plan that includes healthy fats such as olive oil and nuts isn't likely to cause weight gain, a new study finds.

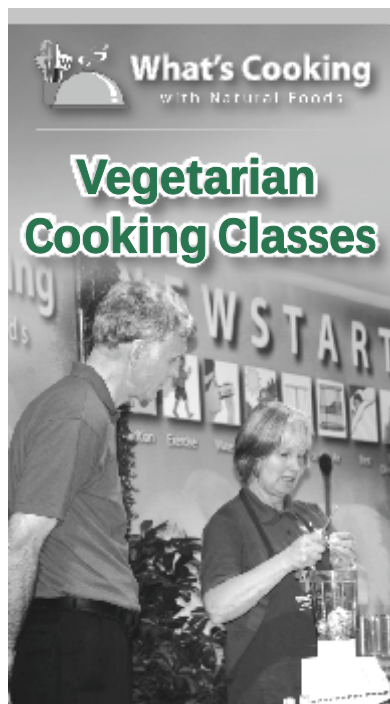
"Studies show that a Mediterranean diet rich in vegetable fats such as olive oil and nuts had little effect on body weight or waist circumference compared to people on a low-fat diet. The Mediterranean diet has well-known health benefits and includes healthy fats, such as vegetable oils and nuts," said study lead author Dr. Ramon Estruch, of the University of Barcelona in Spain.

The study included more than 7,400 women and men in Spain, aged 55 to 80. People in all three groups lost some weight: an average of just under a kilogram per person in the olive oil group, 600 grams in the low-fat diet group, 400 grams in the nut group, researchers said.

Waist circumference did increase slightly in all three groups, though less so in those on the healthy fat diets. The low-fat group had an increase of about 12 mm per person. The olive oil group saw an increase of about 85 mm, and the nut group only saw an increase in waist circumference of 37 mm, the study authors reported.

—HealthDay News, June 6, 2016

HealthDay News



Our next cooking class series will commence in Christchurch in August.

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- Sugar-free Jams, Biscuits and Cakes & Desserts
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Tuesday, 23 August	Tuesday, 13 September
Tuesday, 30 August	Tuesday, 20 September

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Recipe - Tasty Tamale Bake

- | | |
|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| ½ c water | 1 t turmeric |
| ¼ cup olive oil | 1 t onion powder (optional) |
| 1 large carrot diced or grated | 1 400g tin of chopped tomatoes |
| 1 large onion diced | 1 400g tin whole corn |
| 1 c capsicum diced (optional) | 1 c cooked beans * |
| 1 large clove garlic crushed | 2 t celtic salt |
| 1 t cumin | 1 c soya milk |
| 1 t coriander | 1 2/3 c polenta (cornmeal) |

Place in saucepan first 10 ingredients and simmer until vegetables are tender. Add remaining ingredients in order given and mix well together. Simmer until thickened then place into oiled dish 23 x 33 cm. Cover with tin foil and bake for 1 hour at 180° Celsius.

*e.g. black beans, pinto beans, chickpeas, sprouted beans, etc.