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Natural Insights for Well Being®

December 2009

Healthy Prostate

Nutrients extend life in prostate cancer, exercise adds insurance

In men with prostate cancer, vitamins E and B6 extended life, green tea lowered signs of prostate cancer activity, and exercise cut chances and severity of the disease, four new studies reveal.

Doctors wanted to know if vitamin E could extend life in those with prostate cancer. Researchers analyzed an earlier cancer prevention study of 29,000 male smokers who had taken 50 mg of vitamin E (alpha-tocopherol) per day, with or without 20 mg of beta-carotene, or a placebo, for six years. Twelve years after the study ended, about 1,900 of the men had prostate cancer. Compared to those with the lowest vitamin E levels at the start of the study, men with the highest vitamin E levels who also took vitamin E in the study were about half as likely to have died from the disease nine years after the study ended, and were 74 percent less likely to have passed away 12 years after.

In a nutrition study, researchers measured the diets of 525 men with prostate cancer and found that—among men whose cancer was confined to the prostate—those who consumed the most vitamin B6 were 29 percent less likely to die from the disease during 20 years of follow-up compared to men



who consumed the least vitamin B6.

In a green tea study, 26 men scheduled for surgery to remove a cancerous prostate took 1,300 mg of green tea polyphenols, including 800 mg of epigallocatechin 3-gallate (EGCG) per day, for 35 days before the operation. Signs of cancer activity in the blood were significantly lower after taking the green tea supplement.

In an exercise study, doctors found that men who exercised moderately—walking, for example—for nine hours per week were much less likely to have prostate cancer, or had less-severe cancer, than men who exercised less, and that as exercise increased, cancer chances decreased.

REFERENCE: CANCER RESEARCH; 2009, VOL. 69, No. 9, 3833-41

DECEMBER'S

Healthy Tip

More Energy

In one of the first human studies on the anti-inflammatory antioxidant quercetin, a dozen healthy men and women, average age 23, took 500 mg of quercetin twice per day, or a placebo, for seven days, then traded places for another seven days. Compared to placebo, those taking quercetin could absorb four percent more oxygen, and ride a stationary exercise bicycle 13 percent longer before fatigue. Study authors believe that quercetin raises endurance and relieves fatigue by increasing mitochondria, the energy powerhouse of the cell, and that this study shows rapid improvement in endurance capacity in a short time.

REFERENCE: INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF SPORT NUTRITION & EXERCISE METABOLISM; 2009, ELECTRONIC PRE-PUBLICATION

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Better Blood Flow for Diabetics

Nutrients lowered chances of heart disease in diabetes

Omega-3 fatty acids lowered inflammation linked to heart disease, and higher levels of vitamin C and coenzyme Q10 meant better blood vessel function in diabetics, three new studies reveal.

In a diabetes study, doctors wanted to see if omega-3 fatty acids could lower the chances of cardiovascular disease common in diabetics. A group of about 80 similar type 2 diabetics took an omega-3 supplement or a placebo. After



two months, homocysteine levels—an inflammatory sign of cardiovascular disease—were 1 percent lower in the placebo group compared to 22 percent lower for the omega-3 group. The omega-3 group also showed signs of better long-term blood sugar control, while the placebo group did not. The omega-3 formula included 1,548 mg of eicosapentaenoic acid (EPA), 828 mg of docosahexaenoic acid (DHA), and 338 mg of other omega-3s per day.

In a study of young type 1 diabetics, aged 10 to 22, doctors thought that vitamin C might help prevent the blood vessel damage that can lead to cardiovascular disease. Researchers measured signs of early blood vessel disease in about 60 male and female type 1 diabetics and found that those with the lowest vitamin C levels had

signs of circulation problems beginning in the smallest blood vessels.

In another diabetes study, doctors explained that statin drugs can deplete coenzyme Q10 (CoQ10), raising inflammation and impairing blood vessels. About two dozen type 2 diabetics with impaired blood flow who were taking statin drugs also took 200 mg of CoQ10 per day, or a placebo. After 12 weeks, those in the CoQ10 group had 1 percent better blood vessel relaxation, with no change for placebo. Levels of CoQ10 nearly tripled in the CoQ10 group, which researchers said may also help relieve the muscle pain that is a common side effect of statin drugs.

REFERENCE: NUTRITION, METABOLISM AND CARDIOVASCULAR DISEASE; 2009, ELECTRONIC PRE-PUBLICATION

Nutritional Approach to Cancer

Phytosterols reduce chances of several cancers, lycopene may reduce colorectal cancer, and women with cancer who took cod liver oil or multivitamin-minerals lived longer, in three new studies.

In a review of cancer studies that analyzed diet, researchers found that phytosterols—plant compounds found in grains, legumes, vegetable oils, and nuts—may inhibit lung, stomach, ovarian, and breast cancers. Doctors believe phytosterols keep the body from absorbing cholesterol, lowering the chances of cardiovascular disease. Phytosterols also activate enzymes that keep cancer cells from growing and speed their death, doctors said.

In a cancer risk study, doctors thought that lycopene—the antioxidant

red pigment in tomatoes and other fruits and vegetables—could lower chances of the disease. About 70 men and women with benign colorectal tumors or a family history of colorectal cancer took 30 mg of lycopene per day, or a placebo. After eight weeks, researchers found that the lycopene group had much higher blood levels of a protein that helps control a cancer-stimulating compound, and concluded that lycopene may reduce chances of colorectal and other major cancers such as prostate and pre-menopausal breast cancers.

Doctors in a Norwegian cancer study measured the diets of nearly 70,000 women with cancer and found that those with a solid tumor who took cod liver oil daily—the most common supplement in Norway—for a year before diagnosis were 23 percent less likely to die, and women with lung cancer were 44 percent less likely, compared to women who did not take

cod liver oil. Women with solid tumors who took other dietary supplements daily—including multivitamin-minerals—were 30 percent less likely to die, and women with lung cancer who took other supplements occasionally were 45 percent less likely, compared to women who did not take other supplements.

REFERENCE: INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF CANCER; 2009, VOL. 125, No. 5, 1155-60



See Better Longer

Nutrients and good diet slowed eye disease

Healthy diets with omega-3s, and carotenoids plus antioxidants, helped preserve eyesight in age-related macular degeneration, or AMD, two new studies reveal.

Doctors from Tufts University, Boston, Massachusetts, said that, because the omega-3s docosahexaenoic acid (DHA) and eicosapentaenoic acid (EPA) protect against AMD, they wanted to re-analyze an earlier AMD study which had tested a range of vitamin-mineral supplements but had not measured diet. Researchers examined the diets of nearly 3,000 participants with AMD and found that, regardless of the supplements they had taken, those who consumed more than 64 mg of DHA per day or more than 42 mg of EPA per day were about 26 percent less likely to have

advanced AMD compared to those who consumed the least DHA or EPA.

In another finding from the same re-analysis, researchers discovered that AMD progressed 24 percent more slowly in those who consumed a lower-glycemic diet including high-quality complex carbohydrates compared to those who consumed a higher-glycemic diet with more-refined carbohydrates.

In another AMD study, doctors said that while they do not know what causes AMD, they do know that progressive oxidative damage plays a role. Over 400 participants with at least early-stage AMD took a placebo or a daily antioxidant formula containing the carotenoids lutein and zeaxanthin. After 12 months, the rate of decline to late-stage AMD from early-stage AMD had slowed in the antioxidant group but not in the placebo group. The antioxidant group could see more clearly at a distance compared to placebo and, while

the placebo group had lost macular pigment—the yellow color in the lens and retina of the eye that enables sight and protects eyes from light—the antioxidant group maintained stable macular pigment levels. The name of the study was Carotenoids and Co-antioxidants in Age-Related Maculopathy, or CARMA.

REFERENCE: BRITISH JOURNAL OF OPHTHALMOLOGY; 2009, VOL. 93, No. 9, 1241-6

CARMA STUDY FORMULA

BETA-CAROTENE	6,600 IU
COPPER	4 MG
LUTEIN/ZEAXANTHIN	4 MG
MANGANESE	10 MG
RIBOFLAVIN	10 MG
SELENIUM	40 MCG
VITAMIN C	400 MG
VITAMIN E	150 IU
ZINC	60 MG

New Approaches to Alzheimer's

Curcumin and vitamin D may help slow Alzheimer's disease, and having close friends and family lowers chances of dementia, in two new studies.

Doctors in an Alzheimer's disease (AD) study explained that, while they do not know what causes AD, they do know that, in healthy people, the immune system keeps abnormal proteins from building up in the brain. In AD, the immune system malfunctions and allows the proteins to form deposits in brain tissue. In the study, researchers tried to improve the immune-system white blood cells that keep brain tissue free from abnormal proteins. Scientists took blood samples from nine participants with AD and, in a

lab, incubated the white blood cells with the abnormal proteins, and then added vitamin D3 and curcumin-like compounds called curcuminoids.

Doctors found that the curcuminoids helped the white blood cells bind with the proteins and that vitamin D accelerated how quickly the white blood cells absorbed the proteins in most of the tests.

The researchers believe that there are two types of AD, one which responds well to curcuminoids, and one that does not. Scientists think the difference may be the presence or absence of a gene that allows the immune system to clear the abnormal proteins, and concluded, "Since vitamin D and curcumin work differently with the immune system, we may find that a combination of the two, or each used alone, may be more

effective, depending on the individual patient." The research is in its very early stages and the doctors have yet to recommend a dosage for curcuminoids or vitamin D to combat AD.

In a dementia study, researchers followed over 2,000 women, at least 78 years old, without dementia, for four years and found that women with larger active social networks of family and friends were 26 percent less likely to develop dementia.

REFERENCE: JOURNAL OF ALZHEIMER'S DISEASE; 2009, VOL. 17, No. 3, 703-17



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Pulling Your Hair?

Nutrient may help soothe nerves

N-acetyl-cysteine reduced symptoms of trichotillomania, the constant urge to pull one's hair.

Doctors in a trichotillomania (TTM) study noted that N-acetyl-cysteine (NAC) helps regulate glutamate, one of the most common nerve-signaling chemicals in the brain, and prior studies have shown NAC eased other repetitive or compulsive disorders. Researchers gave 45 women and five men with TTM, average age 34, 1,200 mg to 1,400 mg of NAC per day, or a placebo. After nine weeks, 56 percent of those who took NAC were much, or very much, improved compared to 16 percent for placebo. Scientists explained that people with

TTM pull their hair as a way to cope with anxiety and other difficult emotions. TTM does not hurt, and those with TTM are not trying to damage themselves. Study authors noted that virtually all brain functions involve glutamate and believe this is the first attempt to modify glutamate nerve-signal activity to treat TTM.

REFERENCE: ARCHIVES OF GENERAL PSYCHIATRY; 2009, VOL. 66, No. 7, 756-63



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