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Natural Insights for Well Being®

May 2017

Cognition

Nutrients improve cognition scores in AD, protect against cognitive decline

Probiotics improved mental state scores

In one of the first studies to link gut health to mental function, probiotics improved cognition scores in those with Alzheimer's disease (AD). In this study, 52 people with AD took a placebo or a daily probiotic including *L. acidophilus*, *L. casei*, *bifidobacterium bifidum*, and *L. fermentum* at a concentration of two-billion colony forming units each.

After 12 weeks, those taking the probiotics saw significant improvement in standard mini-mental state exam scores, to 10.6 from 8.7, on a maximum scale of 30, while the placebo group declined.

Those in the probiotics group also saw lower triglycerides, very-low-density lipoprotein (vLDL) cholesterol, and high-sensitivity C-reactive protein; an inflammatory factor. Probiotics also reduced insulin resistance and insulin-producing cell activity improved.

While the results were modest and participants remained severely cognitively impaired, doctors said the study is important because it provides evidence that the gut microbiome plays a role in neurological function and that probiotics can improve human cognition.



Vitamins C and E protect cognition

At the start of this cognition study, 5,269 older men and women reported what vitamin supplements they were taking. Doctors tested cognition then, and twice more at five-year intervals. About one in six developed some form of dementia over the 12-year study period.

Comparing those taking vitamins C and E to those who did not revealed chances for developing Alzheimer's disease were 40 percent lower in the vitamin group, 38 percent lower for any kind of dementia, and 23 percent lower for any cognitive impairment other than dementia. The results were similar for vitamins C or E separately.

Discussing the findings, doctors said it may be that these antioxidant vitamins reduce nerve damage and death due to oxidative stress, both of which play a role in dementia.

REFERENCE: FRONTIERS IN AGING NEUROSCIENCE; NOVEMBER, 2016, PUBLISHED ONLINE

MAY'S

Healthy Insight Eggs Reduce Stroke

People who consumed up to one egg a day were less likely to have a stroke than those who ate fewer than two eggs per week, and eggs did not increase chances of heart disease. The findings come from an international review of long-term follow-up studies in the United States, Japan, Australia, Spain, and the United Kingdom between 1982 and 2015.

Because eggs contain cholesterol, doctors have debated their role in health, but the recent literature suggests that cholesterol from diet is not a health concern. Eggs are a rich source of essential fatty acids and protein.

REFERENCE: JOURNAL OF THE AMERICAN COLLEGE OF NUTRITION; 2016, VOL. 35, No. 8

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Healthy Pregnancy

Probiotics lead to healthier moms and babies

Better pregnancy outcomes

When the amniotic sac ruptures—when the “water breaks”—prematurely; before 37 weeks, chances for poor pregnancy outcomes increase, including serious infection in the womb. In this study, 106 women hospitalized with amniotic sac rupture at 24 to 34 weeks gestation took standard antibiotics alone or with a probiotic vaginal suppository for 10 days.

Women taking the probiotic suppositories gave birth at an average of 35.49 weeks compared to 32.53 weeks for antibiotics alone, with an average increased time in the womb of 5.06 weeks vs. 2.48 weeks. Babies weighed 5.38 pounds for probiotics vs. 4.42 pounds for antibiotics alone.

Babies born to moms in the probiotic group were also less likely to be admitted to neonatal intensive care

for oxygen or mechanical ventilation, and had shorter hospital stays. Doctors said probiotics may help prevent vaginal bacterial infection and improve pregnancy outcomes.

Less pregnancy gingivitis

During pregnancy, hormonal changes increase blood flow to gum tissues, cause inflammation, suppress the immune response to oral bacteria, and allow plaque to form and develop into gingivitis. Untreated, gingivitis can cause periodontitis, an infection that raises chances for preterm birth.

In this study, 45 healthy women with pregnancy gingivitis at the start of the third trimester took a placebo or the probiotic *L. reuteri* in a lozenge that delivered five-hundred-million colony-forming units, twice per day until birth.

After the women delivered their

babies, gingival symptoms and plaque build-up in the probiotic group were significantly lower compared to placebo. Doctors concluded *L. reuteri* reduces harmful oral microbes without harming teeth, and may be a valuable new tool to help control pregnancy gingivitis.

REFERENCE: FETAL DIAGNOSIS AND THERAPY; 2017, 450995, PUBLISHED ONLINE



Healthy Kids

Omega-3s reduce asthma, improve reading in children

Mothers' omega-3 reduces asthma in offspring

Childhood asthma in the United States is increasing and at historically high levels. Doctors believe one factor is low levels of omega-3s in the Western diets consumed by mothers during

pregnancy. In this study, 663 women in the 24th week of pregnancy began taking 2,400 mg of omega-3 fish oil per day, or a placebo, through birth.

Doctors followed the children for five years and found kids born to moms in the omega-3 group were 31 percent less likely to have developed asthma compared to kids whose moms had taken the placebo. Kids of the omega-3 moms were also 28 percent less likely to develop persistent wheeze, and were less likely to have respiratory infections. Results were greatest for children of mothers who began the study with the lowest levels of EPA and DHA. They were 54 percent less likely to have developed asthma compared to kids of moms in the placebo group.

Omega-3 and -6 improved reading

In this reading study, 122 children, ages 9 to 10, took a placebo or 558 mg EPA plus 174 mg DHA and 60 mg GLA per day. After three months, kids taking the omega-3/6 had better reading skills compared to placebo. Doctors saw the greatest benefit when kids had to read a nonsense work aloud, pronouncing it correctly; and to quickly read aloud a series of letters. Children with mild attention problems who took omega-3/6 showed the most improvement. The brain largely relies on omega-3s for nerve cell communication, doctors said.

REFERENCE: NEW ENGLAND JOURNAL OF MEDICINE; 2016, VOL. 375, No. 26, 2530-9



Lipids

Nutrients improve lipid profiles and other metabolic factors

Sea buckthorn reduced cholesterol

Doctors combined results from 11 studies covering 900 people who took sea buckthorn berries or extract. Some participants were healthy, some had fatty liver disease, and others had high lipid levels.

Overall, sea buckthorn reduced total cholesterol by an average of 24.3 mg per deciliter of blood (mg/dL); triglycerides by 40.7 mg/dL, and LDL cholesterol by

23.9 mg/dL. Those taking sea buckthorn who had higher chances of developing heart or circulatory diseases saw HDL, the “good” cholesterol, increase by 10.4 mg/dL.

Discussing the findings, doctors said the heart-protective effects of sea buckthorn may be due to the antioxidant phytochemicals, especially flavonoids and beta-sitosterol.

Ginger reduced inflammation, improved lipids

Doctors analyzed findings from nine studies covering 449 people who had taken one to three grams of ginger per day for study durations of eight weeks to three months.

Overall, those taking ginger saw the inflammatory factor C-reactive protein decline by an average of 0.84 milligrams

per liter of blood, regardless of the dose of ginger in the study. The ginger groups also had lower levels of an enzyme involved in inflammation, and fewer pro-inflammatory proteins.

Average triglyceride levels declined by 1.63 mg/dL, and HDL, the “good” cholesterol, increased by 1.16 mg/dL. Fasting blood sugar levels declined by an average of 1.35 mg/dL, and long-term average blood sugar levels declined by one percentage point, a finding doctors said was quite significant. The phenols, polyphenols, and flavonoids in ginger may provide these blood-sugar lowering effects.

Doctors said supplementing with ginger may be an effective means of preventing and managing heart and circulatory diseases.

REFERENCE: TRENDS IN FOOD SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY; MARCH, 2017, VOL. 61, 1-10



MAY'S

Ahead of the Curve

Early-Stage Discoveries: Crabapple, Rutin, and Pyrroloquinoline Quinone

Good results in the lab can lead to larger human trials. Here are some of the most promising recent findings.

Crabapple, lipids, and metabolism

Traditional Chinese medicine has used crabapple to treat diarrhea, indigestion, and other digestive diseases. Doctors wanted to see if crabapple antioxidants could improve lipid and blood sugar profiles.

In the lab, three crabapple varieties—*M. xaojinensis*, Indian Magic, and *M. prunifolia*—reduced triglyceride levels in obese mice on a high-fat diet. These three plus two other crabapple varieties lowered total and LDL cholesterol, and raised levels of the main enzyme responsible for regulating cholesterol balance in the liver.

Rutin for metabolic disorders

In 2009, doctors discovered that adults have small amounts of beneficial, energy-burning brown fat cells, and that people with lower body mass index scores tend to have more brown fat. In the lab, obese mice took 1 mg of rutin per milliliter of drinking water. Rutin significantly reduced body fat, increased energy expenditure, and improved glucose balance.

“Unlike hibernating animals, humans have only a small spot of brown fat,” doctors said. The discovery has the potential to unleash advances in human metabolism.

PQQ protects the liver

In the lab, pregnant mice ate a normal or high-fat-and-sugar Western-type diet with or without a pyrroloquinoline quinone (PQQ) supplement. Their offspring continued on the same diets with or without PQQ. Both in the womb and after birth, those exposed to PQQ had less fat in the liver, even while continuing the high-fat-and-sugar diet.

Doctors also found the pregnant moms who got PQQ had lower levels of inflammation. PQQ is a natural antioxidant in soil and plant foods.

REFERENCE: JOURNAL OF FUNCTIONAL FOODS; 2016, VOL. 27, 416-28

Shop Local

Shifting just 10% of your shopping to locally-owned businesses adds

\$128 million a year
to our local Tri-Cities economy.

For every \$100 you spend at a national chain, the total local economic impact is only \$13, yet the same amount spent with local merchants yields \$45.

That's more than **3 times** the impact.

When you shop online ALL the money you spend is taken from our LOCAL economy.

A marketplace of more locally-owned businesses ensures greater innovation, competition and diversity in products and services.

Natural Foods Market has been locally-owned for more than 30 years.

Flourless Egg Pancakes

Everybody loves pancakes! While you are enjoying these protein-rich cakes, please see page 1 for a new study that found people who got up to one egg a day were less likely to have a stroke.

Ingredients:

1 large ripe banana
2 eggs, beaten
1/8 tsp baking powder
Pinch of ground cinnamon (optional)
2 tsp grass fed butter or coconut oil
Maple syrup, honey, or apple butter
to taste



Directions: Mash banana in a mixing bowl, add eggs, baking powder, and cinnamon. Mix batter well by hand or in a high-speed blender for smoother pancakes. Heat butter or coconut oil over medium heat, spoon a scant quarter cup of batter into the hot, but not smoking oil. Cook for 2-3 minutes as bubbles form and the edges start to dry out. Flip and cook on the other side for another 2-3 minutes. Repeat with the remaining batter. Top with maple syrup, honey, or apple butter. Serves 2 generously.

Your Good News!®

We're dedicated to discovering the benefits of good nutrition and healthy lifestyle, and hope this issue of Natural Insights for Well Being® informs and inspires you to take an active role in your health. Please ask us to assist you with any natural products you would like to know more about.

These articles provide nutritional information only and do not replace professional medical advice.

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