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Natural Insights for Well Being®

October 2017

Better Circulation, Performance

Two new studies reveal benefits of vitamin K2

Fewer calcium deposits

When people lose kidney function, they must go on dialysis to cleanse the blood of water and waste, but often see calcium build up in blood vessels. Vitamin K2 plays a role in controlling calcium build-up.

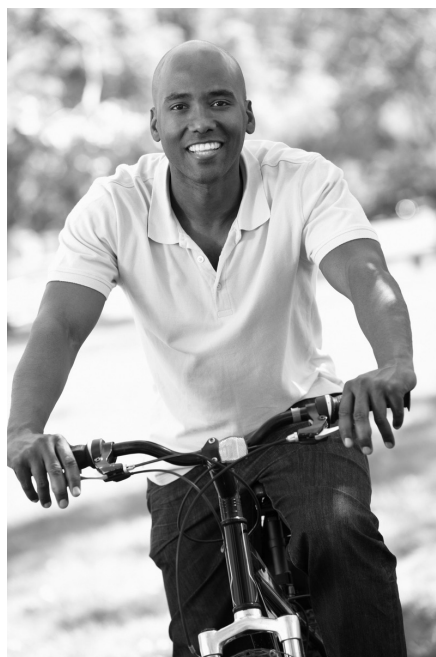
Earlier studies found those on dialysis tended to have lower levels of vitamin K2 compared to healthy people. In this study, 50 people on dialysis took 360 mcg of vitamin K2, as menaquinone-7, per day for four weeks.

Doctors measured a protein in the blood called matrix Gla protein, or MGP, which inhibits calcium build-up in blood vessels but needs vitamin K to activate this function. When vitamin K levels are low, MGP becomes inactive.

Doctors found those with high levels of inactive MGP were deficient in vitamin K2 and had more blood vessel calcification. Compared to the start of the study, levels of inactive MGP decreased 86 percent after taking vitamin K2 for four weeks.

Better athletic performance

Cells that produce energy have specialized units—mitochondria—that contain the smallest energy units, called adenosine triphosphate (ATP). Muscles, particularly heart muscle, contain high numbers of mitochondria to have enough energy to move the



body. Vitamin K2 plays a key role in producing ATP.

In this study, 26 male and female athletes took a placebo or 325 mcg of vitamin K2 per day for four weeks, then 160 mcg of vitamin K2 per day for four more weeks.

Taking a standard cycle ergometer test, the vitamin K2 group saw a 12 percent increase in the maximum amount of blood the heart could pump by the end of the study. Vitamin K2 appeared to reduce by several months the amount of continuous training it would take to increase heart pumping capacity without vitamin K2.

REFERENCE: BMC NEPHROLOGY; JUNE, 2017, 18:191; PUBLISHED ONLINE

OCTOBER'S

Healthy Insight Legumes and Diabetes

People who eat more legumes and beans, especially lentils, were less likely to develop type 2 diabetes. In this study, doctors measured the diets of 3,349 older adults with higher chances of heart and circulatory disease, but without diabetes. Over four years, those who consumed more than three servings per week were 35 percent less likely to have developed type 2 diabetes compared to those who got fewer legumes in the diet.

Lentils were most beneficial, followed by chickpeas. Practicing a Mediterranean-type diet, including frequently eating legumes, may help older adults with heart and circulatory concerns avoid type 2 diabetes.

REFERENCE: CLINICAL NUTRITION JOURNAL; MARCH, 2017, PUBLISHED ONLINE

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Better Brain

Nutrients improve memory, cognition, and reduce stress

Ashwagandha, memory, and cognition

Ayurvedic medicine uses ashwagandha to improve memory and cognitive function. In this study, 50 adults over age 35 with memory loss, a diagnosis of early dementia, or an impaired score on a standard mental-state exam took a placebo or 300 mg of ashwagandha twice per day for eight weeks. Participants were not taking any other cognitive-enhancing drugs or treatments.

After eight weeks, both groups improved in immediate memory, but the ashwagandha group had much higher scores in logical memory, pairing words, recognizing faces, and executive function—the ability to make decisions. The ashwagandha group also had better attention and was able to

process information faster than placebo. Doctors said ashwagandha may help treat mild cognitive impairment and Alzheimer's disease.

Lutein and zeaxanthin reduce stress

Recent studies have found the antioxidant carotenoids in the eye play a role in cognition as well. In this study, 59 healthy people, age 18 to 25, took a placebo or a combination of lutein, zeaxanthin, and meso-zeaxanthin, at a combined dose of 13 mg or 27 mg total carotenoids per day.

Doctors measured changes in levels of carotenoids in the macula of the eye, gave participants psychological stress and anxiety tests, and measured levels of cortisol, the fight-or-flight hormone released by the adrenal glands.

After six and 12 months, while the placebo group had not improved, both low and high-dose carotenoid groups had less psychological stress, better emotional and physical health, and lower cortisol levels. As levels of carotenoid pigment in the eye increased, psychological stress scores improved.

REFERENCE: JOURNAL OF DIETARY SUPPLEMENTS; FEBRUARY, 2017, PUBLISHED ONLINE

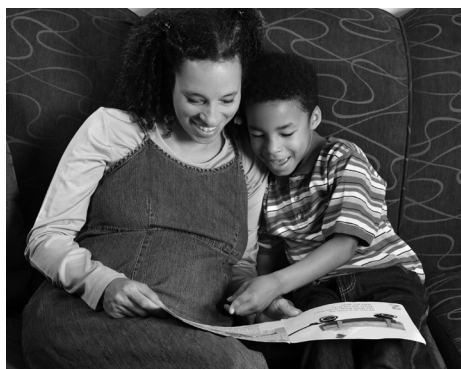


Healthy Pregnancy

Nutrients help keep moms healthy, improve baby's cognition

EGCG for moms and babies

Some women can develop elevated blood sugar in pregnancy, a condition called gestational diabetes. Chances are higher for women who are obese, have high blood pressure, or are over age 30, among other factors. The condition may allow the baby to grow too large and may lead to complications after birth.



In this study, 326 women in the third trimester of pregnancy with gestational diabetes took a placebo or 500 mg of epigallocatechin-gallate (EGCG) per day through birth.

Compared to placebo, women who had taken EGCG were more likely to give birth to normal-weight babies—less than 8 lbs. 13 oz. The women and their babies were also more likely to have normal blood sugar levels. Newborns were also less likely to have respiratory distress, have a more normal heart rate, better muscle tone and reflexes, and healthy skin color.

Mom's multivitamin improves child cognition

In this large, long-term study, 31,290 Indonesian mothers took a

prenatal multivitamin mineral or an iron and folic acid supplement from conception through birth. Doctors followed up with 2,879 of the children who were attending school at ages 9 through 12.

Children whose mothers had taken the multivitamin mineral had higher scores in general intellectual ability, comparable to one more year of schooling compared to kids whose moms had not taken the multivitamin mineral. Children of the multivitamin moms were also better able to learn new skills such as typing, reading, math, speaking and understanding language, learning sequences, rules, and categories.

REFERENCE: JOURNAL OF HUMAN NUTRITION & DIETETICS; MARCH, 2017, PUBLISHED ONLINE

Cancer Update

Omega-3s improve outcomes in cancer treatments

Protection during chemotherapy

Earlier studies found omega-3s helped maintain body weight and muscle mass during chemotherapy, but this study focused on how omega-3s might protect against chemo-toxicity.

In this study, 61 people undergoing chemotherapy for esophageal cancer took a nutritional supplement drink with 250 mg of omega-3s or 900



mg of omega-3s. Participants started taking the omega-3s three days before chemotherapy through the 12th day of treatment. Doctors administered the liquid through a nasal tube when participants were unable to drink.

After chemotherapy, the high-omega-3 group had less inflammation and fewer ulcerations in the mouth; a common complication of this type of treatment. The high-omega-3 group also had severe diarrhea half as often as the low-omega-3 group, and doctors also found fewer abnormalities in liver enzymes for those taking the high dose of omega-3s.

Better immunity, less inflammation

The most common surgical treatment for gastrointestinal cancer is to remove that part of the intestine

containing the tumor and reconnect the remaining healthy tissue, triggering an immune and inflammatory response.

Doctors reviewed findings from nine placebo-controlled studies involving 623 gastrointestinal surgeries where participants took omega-3 nutritional supplements. Compared to placebo, those taking omega-3s had lower levels of two types of inflammation: C-reactive protein and interleukin-6. The omega-3 groups also had higher levels of several immune white blood cell types that recognize and attack bacteria, viruses, and foreign tissue.

Doctors said it is best to start nutritional support five to seven days before surgery and continue after the procedure to help reduce inflammation and protect the body from infection.

REFERENCE: NUTRITION JOURNAL; JANUARY, 2017, VOL. 33, 204-10

Healthy Liver

Nutrients improve liver function and reduce inflammation

Curcumin improved liver function

The healthy liver has a certain amount of fat, but too much fat can cause inflammation and scarring, eventually disrupting liver function. In this study, 87 people with non-alcoholic fatty liver disease, and scarring just beginning, took a placebo or 1,000 mg of curcumin per day.

After eight weeks, while the placebo group had not improved, the curcumin group had lower body mass index scores and smaller waist size. Those taking curcumin also had healthier lower levels of liver enzymes, which increased for placebo. An ultrasound scan revealed improved liver condition in 75 percent of those taking curcumin compared to less than 5 percent for placebo.

CoQ10 reduced post-operative inflammation

The most common kind of liver cancer in men and women over 50 typically comes from long term damage and scarring due to chronic inflammation, high levels of oxidative stress, excess alcohol, autoimmune disease, viral infection, or iron overload.

In the first study to promote antioxidant enzyme activity and reduce oxidative stress and inflammation after surgery, 41 people with liver cancer took a placebo or 300 mg of CoQ10 per day.

Twelve weeks after surgery, CoQ10 levels had increased five times more for CoQ10 compared to placebo. Oxidative stress levels decreased in the CoQ10 group while increasing for placebo. Levels of the inflammatory molecule,

C-reactive protein, decreased a similar amount in both groups, but in another, interleukin-6, levels in the CoQ10 group were half that of placebo. The CoQ10 group also had greater increases in antioxidant capacity, especially the important antioxidant, superoxide dismutase (SOD).

REFERENCE: DRUG RESEARCH STUTTART; 2017, VOL. 67, No. 4, 244-51



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\$128 million a year
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Lentils with Mushrooms and Greens

This quick, easy and hearty dish will warm you up. While you enjoy, please see page 1 for a new study that found those who got more legumes in the diet were less likely to develop type 2 diabetes.

Ingredients:

1/2 c brown or green lentils	1/4 tsp each ground cumin, coriander, black pepper
2 1/2 c water or broth	1/8 tsp ground turmeric
3 tbsp extra-virgin olive oil	1/2 lb tender greens such as spinach or Swiss chard, coarsely chopped
1/2 lb shiitake mushrooms caps, sliced	Garnish: 1 tbsp chopped parsley
Salt to taste	
1 clove garlic, minced	

Directions: In small saucepan, cover lentils with 2 1/2 cups water or broth and bring to a boil. Reduce heat to low and cook covered until tender (20-30 minutes). Meanwhile, sauté the mushrooms in 2 tbsp olive oil for about 5 minutes, season with salt. Add remaining olive oil, garlic, and spices. Cook another minute until fragrant. Add greens, stirring until wilted. Combine with lentils and their liquid and simmer for 3 more minutes. Ladle into bowls, and sprinkle with parsley. Serve hot.

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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