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Natural Insights for Well Being®

August 2019

Circulation

Nutrients support healthy arteries, lipids

Magnesium reduced PAD

Peripheral artery disease (PAD) narrows arteries distant from the heart; most often affecting the legs, but also the arms and gut. In this large study, the first of its kind, doctors followed 13,826 adults for an average of 24 years, screening each for circulating magnesium levels every three years. Participants began the study without PAD.

Overall, those whose magnesium levels were no higher than 1.4 milliequivalents per liter of blood (mEq/L) were 38 percent more likely to have developed PAD over the study period compared to those whose magnesium levels were at least 1.8 mEq/L.

To isolate the health effects of magnesium, doctors adjusted for other factors that raise chances for PAD, including smoking, diabetes, high cholesterol, and high blood pressure, and still found an independent link between PAD and low magnesium levels in both men and women.

Amla improved lipids

This study included 98 adults with abnormally high lipid levels who took a placebo or 500 mg of amla twice per day. After 12 weeks, for those taking amla, major lipids including triglycerides, total cholesterol, and low-



and very-low-density lipoproteins (LDL and VLDL) were significantly lower compared to placebo.

LDL cholesterol raises chances for—and HDL cholesterol protects against—heart and circulatory events. Doctors used an index score to compare proteins linked to LDL cholesterol (Apolipoprotein B) with proteins linked to HDL (Apo A1), and saw a decrease of 39 percent, suggesting lower chances for an adverse heart or circulatory event. Among a small number of participants who were pre-diabetic or diabetic, fasting blood sugar levels trended lower.

In an important finding, levels of CoQ10 remained stable, suggesting amla may be a superior cholesterol treatment to statin drugs, which deplete CoQ10.

REFERENCE: ATHEROSCLEROSIS; 2019, VOL. 282, 196-201

AUGUST'S

Healthy Insight Mushroom for Memory

With age, people may lose some memory or words, be forgetful, have lower attention and reduced vision—a set of symptoms known as mild cognitive impairment (MCI). The changes may be subtle, allowing people to perform normal daily activities.

In this six-year study of 663 men and women over age 60, compared to those who ate mushrooms less than once per week, those who ate more than two weekly portions were half as likely to have developed MCI. The most common mushrooms were fresh oyster, golden, shiitake, and white button, and dried and canned mushrooms. Doctors credit ergothioneine, a unique, essential amino acid in mushrooms.

REFERENCE: JOURNAL OF ALZHEIMER'S DISEASE; 2019, VOL. 68, No. 1, 197-203

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Metabolics

Nutrients help rebalance metabolism

Inulin, insulin sensitivity, and the gut microbiome

In this pilot study of nine women and three men, overweight and average age 60, participants took 20 grams of inulin fiber per day or a cellulose fiber placebo for 42 days, stopped for at least 28 days, then switched inulin and placebo for another 42 days.

Compared to the placebo phases, insulin sensitivity improved during the inulin phases; meaning the body was able to use its natural insulin more efficiently to metabolize sugars. In the gut, inulin also increased the class of beneficial bacteria (actinobacteria) that includes the probiotic bifidobacterium. In addition, gut levels of the pathogen clostridia—to which humans have few immune defenses—significantly decreased.

Curcumin improves NAFLD

Non-alcoholic fatty liver disease (NAFLD) occurs when excess fat builds up in the liver due to causes other than alcohol, such as diabetes, obesity, and age, and there is no approved drug treatment. In this study, 84 overweight or obese adults with NAFLD, aged 25 to 50, took a placebo or 40 mg of curcumin after breakfast and dinner.

After three months, while the placebo group had not improved significantly, in the curcumin group, 40 percent of those who began with mild symptoms no longer had NAFLD, and 85 percent of those with moderate NAFLD saw symptoms decrease to mild.

Also for curcumin, the inflammatory factor high-sensitivity C-reactive protein declined 39 percent;

LDL cholesterol declined 15.8 percent, to 114.6 from 135.6; triglycerides declined 18 percent, to 142.5 from 175.9; and fasting blood insulin levels declined 18.75 percent, to 6.5 from 8.0.

REFERENCE: DIABETES, OBESITY & METABOLISM; 2019, VOL. 21, No. 2, 372-6



Mother and Child

Vitamin D reduced asthma, DHA reduced blood pressure

Vitamin D, air pollution, asthma, and obesity

Doctors were curious after noticing inner-city black children were often deficient in vitamin D and frequently had asthma. In this study of 120



Baltimore-area children, ages 5 to 12, doctors periodically measured vitamin D levels, asthma symptoms, and took indoor air samples from children's homes.

After nine months, overall, kids with low levels of vitamin D had more asthma symptoms than those with higher vitamin D levels. In a surprising finding, obese children in homes with the highest air pollution benefited most from higher vitamin D levels reducing asthma symptoms.

Doctors said, in addition to indoor air pollution and low levels of vitamin D, the findings revealed a third factor in childhood asthma: obesity. Taking vitamin D supplements may be the easiest, safest way to increase levels of vitamin D for children in urban environments.

Moms' DHA, kids' blood pressure

In earlier findings, the omega-3 DHA lowered blood pressure in adults and children, but doctors wanted to test how mothers' DHA might affect their children. In this study, doctors followed 171 children born to mothers who had begun taking a placebo or 600 mg of DHA per day at 14.5 weeks pregnant through delivery.

About 30 percent of the children were overweight or obese and, among these, by the age of six, those whose mothers had taken DHA during pregnancy had average systolic and diastolic blood pressures of 100/59 mmHg compared to 104/64 mmHg for placebo.

REFERENCE: JOURNAL OF ALLERGY AND CLINICAL IMMUNOLOGY; 2019, S2213-2918, PUBLISHED ONLINE

Women

Nutrients protect premenopausal women

Green tea reduces bladder infection

Common bladder, or lower urinary tract, infections are easy to treat. Symptoms include painful urination, frequent urges, and bacteria and white blood cells in the urine. Doctors usually prescribe antibiotics for these infections, which are typically caused by *E. coli*. But about 20 percent of *E. coli* strains have become antibiotic resistant.

In this study, 70 healthy premenopausal non-pregnant women, aged 18 to 50, with acute uncomplicated bladder infection, took standard antibiotics plus a placebo or capsules containing 566 mg of phenols and 130 mg of epigallocatechin from green tea. Doctors asked the women to take green tea capsules for three nights before bed in order to maximize its antioxidant

effect overnight.

On the fourth day, while 16 percent of those in the placebo group had no symptoms, 97 percent of those taking green tea had no symptoms.



Vitamin D, omega-3, hormones

Estradiol, an estrogen hormone, is essential to reproductive, bone, heart, and kidney health. In this eight-week study, 86 premenopausal women, aged 33 to 42 and deficient in vitamin D, took 50,000 IU of vitamin D per week; 1,300 mg of fish-oil omega-3 per day; these two nutrients together; or no supplements.

Women taking vitamin D alone saw a decline in estradiol, while those taking omega-3 alone saw vitamin D levels decline. But women who took vitamin D together with omega-3 maintained their estradiol and vitamin D levels, suggesting potential bone, heart, and kidney health benefits in normal, young premenopausal women deficient in vitamin D.

REFERENCE: COMPLEMENTARY THERAPIES IN CLINICAL PRACTICE; 2019, VOL. 34, 13-6

AUGUST'S

Ahead of the Curve

Early-Stage Discoveries: Bone Broth, Tart Cherry, Flaxseed

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

Bone broth benefits

Simmering animal bones for hours releases collagen, hemoglobin, and other proteins which digestion then breaks down into smaller peptides with greater health benefits than whole proteins. In the lab, doctors simulated cooking and digesting dry-cured ham bones and found the newly released peptides inhibited enzymes that constrict blood vessels and trigger abnormal blood clotting activity.

Discussing the findings, doctors said certain peptides released during cooking and digesting bone broth inhibit the activity of enzymes that raise chances for heart and circulatory events.

Tart cherry reduced inflammation

Doctors are beginning to think of body fat, or adipose tissue, as an organ that releases cell-signaling proteins that can regulate appetite and blood sugar, or trigger inflammation. In the lab, rats ate a standard diet with or without tart cherry powder. After eight weeks, those on tart cherry had significantly less adipose tissue inflammation, including lower levels of inflammatory factors interleukin-6 and -1-beta, and tumor necrosis factor alpha. These results suggest tart cherry may reduce systemic inflammation and metabolic syndrome.

Flaxseed improves gut bacteria

In the lab, mice ate a high-fat diet with no fiber, with cellulose fiber or flaxseed fiber, or a standard soy based diet. After 12 weeks, those on the high fat diet with or without cellulose had fewer good gut bacteria, more bacteria linked to obesity, and lower fatty acid levels. Those taking flaxseed were more physically active, had less weight gain, better glucose control, and higher levels of beneficial fatty acids, which doctors said come from fermenting the glue-like layer of the flaxseed shell.

REFERENCE: ENDOCRINOLOGY & METABOLISM; MARCH, 2019, VOL. 316, No. 3

Shop Local

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

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

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Seared Mushroom, Thyme & Garlic

While you savor this scrumptious dish, please see page 1 for a new study that found older adults who regularly ate mushrooms were less likely to develop mild cognitive decline.

Prep: 10 minutes Cook: 10 minutes Serves: 4 as appetizer/2 as entrée

Ingredients:

2 tbsp organic extra virgin olive oil	4 tbsp unsalted butter
12 oz mushrooms (a mixture of oyster, shiitake, and white button) cut into large pieces	2 sprigs fresh thyme
Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper	2 cloves garlic, crushed
	1-2 c cooked rice, farro, polenta, or grain of choice

Directions: Heat oil in large skillet over medium-high heat until just about to smoke. Place mushrooms in skillet in single layer and cook undisturbed until bottoms are golden brown, about 3 minutes. Season with salt and pepper, reduce heat, tossing mushrooms often until golden brown all over. Reduce heat to medium, add butter, thyme, and garlic. As butter melts, tip skillet so butter pools, and spoon the foaming butter over mushrooms until butter smells nutty, about 4 minutes. Remove mushrooms with slotted spoon and serve over hot steamed brown rice, farro, or polenta.

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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