



Stay Healthy!

840 South Rancho Drive #14 • Las Vegas, Nevada
www.stayhealthy.info • info@stayhealthy.info

Natural Insights for Well Being®

June 2013

See Clearly Day and Night

Nutrients improve night vision, reduce age-related blindness

Lutein improves visual performance at night

Lutein is a carotenoid stored in the eye and essential for good vision. Lutein, along with another carotenoid, zeaxanthin, helps reduce discomfort from glare and shortens the time it takes to recover from bright light. Doctors know lutein can improve vision, but few studies have tested lutein in occupations that require night vision.

In this study, 120 healthy drivers who spent an average of 10 hours per day driving during the two years before the study took a placebo or 20 mg of lutein per day. After one year, while there were no changes for placebo, those who took lutein tended to have better distance vision, and had much better sensitivity to contrast and glare, especially at night. The lutein group also had higher levels of lutein in the blood and stored in the eye, and had better visual function scores on the National Eye Institute driving scale.

Discussing their findings, doctors said that although the results do not reveal a direct link between taking lutein supplements and changes in visual acuity, the evidence is clear that lutein supplements can significantly improve visual performance and visual quality of life in low-light environments.



Omega-3 may reduce AMD

Age-related macular degeneration, or AMD, is the increasing blindness in the center of the field of vision, and the most common form of age-related visual impairment. In addition to lutein and zeaxanthin, the eye also stores omega-3 DHA, which helps the retina filter light.

In this study, doctors testing for a link to AMD measured omega-3 levels in 963 men and women, aged at least 73, and followed up with an eye exam seven to 10 years later. Compared to those with lower levels, those with higher circulating levels of omega-3 fatty acids were 38 percent less likely to have developed late-stage AMD.

REFERENCE: NUTRITION JOURNAL; JANUARY, 2013, ELECTRONIC PREPUBLICATION

JUNE'S

Healthy Insight

Breathe Easy with Magnesium

Cystic fibrosis (CF) is an inherited chronic condition weakening the lungs and digestive system and shortening life expectancy. In this study, 44 participants with CF, aged 7 to 19, took 300 mg of magnesium per day, or a placebo, in two alternating 8-week phases. While there was little change after the placebo phases, after each magnesium phase, lung capacity to inhale and expel air increased 11 to 12 percent. Doctors said that by regulating inflammation, magnesium reduced overall CF severity and improved respiratory muscle strength.

REFERENCE: AMERICAN JOURNAL OF CLINICAL NUTRITION; 2012, VOL. 96, NO. 1, 50-6

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Healthy Kids

Nutrients reduce chances of asthma and need for medication

Vitamins C and E

Asthma is increasing in Japanese children, and doctors suspect increases in processed foods and decreases in fruits and vegetables in the diet. Because vitamins C and E protect cells through antioxidant activity, researchers measured these nutrient levels and the total diets of 452 Japanese children, aged 3 to 6, with or without asthma.



Compared to kids who got the least vitamin C or E, those with the highest levels were 65 and 68 percent, respectively, less likely to develop asthma. Doctors also found a small tendency for children who ate the most fruit to have lower chances of developing asthma.

Pycnogenol reduces need for medication

Doctors said asthma symptoms can flare when certain inflammatory molecules increase, and that Pycnogenol®, an anti-inflammatory, can help reduce the need for corticosteroid medication.

In the study, 76 people with stable,

controlled allergic asthma continued to take inhaled corticosteroid (ICS) medication, with or without 50 mg of Pycnogenol twice per day. After six months, six percent of the ICS-only group were able to decrease the daily dose of ICS compared to 55 percent for Pycnogenol.

Researchers saw about one in five in the ICS-only group graduate to a higher ICS dose while no one in the Pycnogenol group had to increase corticosteroids. The Pycnogenol group also had more days with normal exhaled breath volume (peak flow), less need for rescue inhalers, less need to consult a doctor, and more full nights' sleep.

REFERENCE: PUBLIC HEALTH NUTRITION; OCTOBER, 2012, ELECTRONIC PREPUBLICATION

Healthy Men

Nutrients improve fertility and help men shed pounds

Coenzyme Q10 improved fertility

Can you say, “*oligoasthenoteratozoospermia*”? Neither can we, but it means infertility when all the health characteristics of sperm, including shape, ability to move (motility), and concentration per milliliter of semen, are sub-normal. In this study, 228 men with unexplained infertility took 200 mg of coenzyme Q10 per day, or a placebo, for six months, then stopped all treatment for another 12 weeks.

After six months, while the placebo group had not changed, sperm shape, motility, and concentration significantly improved in the CoQ10 group. In the following 12 week non-treatment phase, sperm began to gradually regress to the sub-normal characteristics at the start of the study, but sperm concentration and motility in the CoQ10 group remained

significantly improved.

L-carnitine helps reduce weight

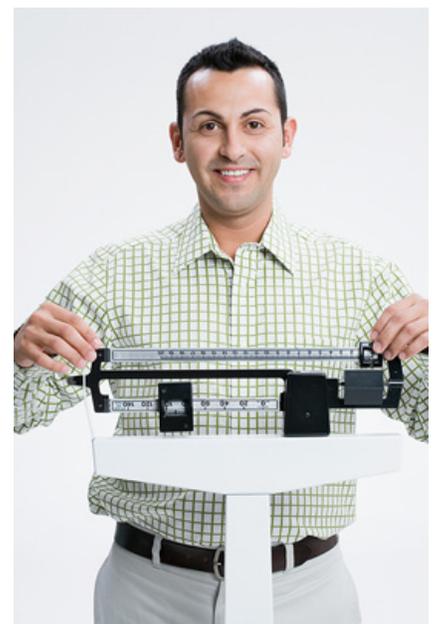
In this pilot study of 24 overweight men, half took 500 mg of L-carnitine per day with or without motivation training while the other half took a placebo with or without motivation training.

The motivation training included a 30-minute live education session on the metabolic functions of L-carnitine, how reducing weight lowers chances for disease, and several ways to increase physical activity. Doctors also asked the men to consume no more than 1,500 to 1,800 calories per day.

After four weeks, the L-carnitine/motivation training group had lost an average of 2.4 pounds while the placebo/non-motivated group gained 1.5 pounds. The L-carnitine/motivated group also had the largest decrease in circulating

triglycerides, down 73 milligrams per deciliter of blood, or 33 percent.

REFERENCE: FOOD & NUTRITION SCIENCE; 2013, VOL. 4, No. 2, ID 28088



Healthy Women

Nutrients relieved migraine headache in PMS and improved perimenopausal symptoms

Chasteberry relieved headache in PMS

Chasteberry, or *Vitex agnus-castus*, is a plant-based compound women around the world have used to treat symptoms of pre-menstrual syndrome. In this study, 100 women reporting migraine headache with PMS took 40 mg of chasteberry per day. There was no placebo group.

After three months, eight women reported no change in overall PMS symptoms, 26 reported a mild decrease in symptoms, and 66 reported a dramatic decrease in symptoms of PMS.

For migraine, 42 of the women reported at least half the number of migraines per month, and 57 women said their migraines lasted half as many days or less than before taking chasteberry.

Pycnogenol improved perimenopausal symptoms

In this study, 170 perimenopausal women, aged 42 to 58, took 30 mg of Pycnogenol® twice per day, or a placebo. After three months, the placebo group reported 29 percent fewer hot-flash symptoms while the Pycnogenol group reported 35 percent fewer hot-flash symptoms.

For insomnia and other sleep problems, 21 percent in the placebo group reported improvements compared to 28 percent for Pycnogenol. The women also reported their feelings of energy and self-worth, with 40 percent improving in the placebo group and 49 percent improving in the Pycnogenol group. Overall perimenopausal symptoms decreased 39 percent in the placebo group and 56 percent for those

taking Pycnogenol.

Doctors said that while there were measurable improvements in the placebo group, women who took Pycnogenol had even greater relief from perimenopausal symptoms, and that Pycnogenol may be a more natural approach for controlling symptoms in menopause.

REFERENCE: JOURNAL OF REPRODUCTIVE MEDICINE; 2013, VOL. 58, No. 1-2, 39-46



Amazing Omega-3

Omega-3s improved weight loss in women, metabolism in girls

Omega-3s help women lose weight

Doctors in this study gave 39 obese women a placebo or an omega-3 supplement while the women maintained their normal diets for four weeks. The supplement contained 420 mg EPA and 1,620 mg DHA per day.

After the first four weeks, the women continued to take the placebo or omega-3 supplement while everyone followed a low-calorie diet for the next four weeks.

While there were no changes in weight or body mass index scores for either group during the first four weeks, EPA and DHA levels doubled for the

omega-3 group. After eight weeks, while the placebo group had not improved, women in the omega-3 group had lost an average 7.2 percent body weight and reduced average body mass index scores by 7.4 percent.

Omega-3s and girls' metabolism

In this study, 25 obese boys and girls, aged 14 to 17, took a placebo or a daily supplement containing 930 mg EPA, 290 mg DHA, 100 mg GLA, and 19.8 IU vitamin E for three months. After a six-week rest phase, participants alternated placebo and supplement for another three months.

While there were no changes for placebo, or blood sugar benefits for boys, girls taking omega-3s had 17 percent greater insulin sensitivity, a 34 percent increase in insulin levels during a glucose tolerance test, and 39 percent better glucose tolerance.

Circulating levels of EPA and DHA increased significantly for both boys and girls, and both had higher tissue and skeletal muscle levels of omega-3s and lower tissue levels of omega-6s, which doctors said raised the chances of maintaining healthy metabolic function in the future.

REFERENCE: FOOD & FUNCTION; 2013, VOL. 4, No. 4, 650-8

Stay Healthy!
840 S. Rancho Drive #14
Las Vegas, NV 89106
(702) 877-2494

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Autism Link

Mothers' folic acid supplements may reduce disorder in children

After studies found women taking folic acid around the time of conception reduced chances for birth defects, the U.S. and several other countries began requiring manufacturers to add folic acid to foods. Doctors in this study probed for a link between mothers' folic acid supplements and chances for autism spectrum disorder (ASD) in their children.

Doctors followed 85,176 children for an average of 6.4 years, with 270 eventually diagnosed with ASD. Compared to children of women who did not take folic acid, children born to mothers who took folic acid supplements, from four weeks before through eight weeks after becoming pregnant, were less than half as likely

to develop ASD. Doctors also found that mothers who took folic acid had healthier lifestyles: they tended not to smoke, to have healthy weight, to have planned their first pregnancy, and to be college graduates.

REFERENCE: JOURNAL OF THE AMERICAN MEDICAL ASSOCIATION; 2013, VOL. 309, NO. 6, 570-7



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