

C.H.I.P. CHAT

The Official Newsletter of the Penticton Branch of the
Coronary Health Improvement Project



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Editorial:

What a wonderful time of the year is spring! I planted some peas in March and they are growing nicely in some of my “square foot garden” patches. In addition, I have planted kale, lettuce and radishes. My granddaughter has her own little garden space and loves to water and attend it. Of course there are some things that still need to be planted, as the weather warms up. It’s wonderful to see all the little green plants growing.



April 22 was the 40th annual “Earth Day” which is celebrated every year globally and focuses on promoting environmental protection in general. As populations grow and cities expand, the human footprint on Earth grows ever larger. The natural world inevitably suffers as our usable water resources shrink, our lakes die and species disappear. In 1970, U.S. Senator Gaylord Nelson named April 22 as a day for grassroots environmental protection. His idea has flourished and continues to gain momentum as countries and consumers strive to go “green”.

The CHIP program certainly encourages its’ participants to go “green”. The most important thing we can do for the environment is to move towards a simpler, saner dietary lifestyle. After all, food is very costly in terms of natural resources: it takes water, fossil fuel and land to produce food. But some food production excessively exploits these resources. Note that the single most environmentally destructive industry in the world is animal agriculture.

The question we need to ask ourselves is “how big is the human footprint that I stamp on the planet, with the little steps I take everyday?” The very best thing that ecologically concerned people can do for the earth is to switch from an animal-based diet to a plant-based diet, because it uses land, water and fuel much more efficiently.

Enjoy the benefits as you move towards and embrace a dietary lifestyle that will allow you to live with all your heart, save money and help take better care of this world.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

MAY CHIP Alumni Meeting: Monday, May 17 @ 7:00 PM @ Penticton Senior’s Drop-In Centre (2965 South Main Street). Featuring food samples, education, book reviews and more!! Don’t Miss!!

JUNE CHIP Alumni Meeting: Monday, June 21 – The Plans are to have a “CHIP Dinner Out” at the “China Beach Restaurant” on Main Street in Naramata. Angie & Dr. McIntosh have rated this restaurant for its’ wonderful vegetarian cuisine. *Reservations will be made in advance of the event so please contact Connie during the week of June 14th to book your spot!*



PORTLAND VEGFEST 2010 – Anyone interested in attending this event scheduled for September 18 and 19 at the Oregon Convention Center, Portland, Oregon.....

Check the website: www.nwveg.org/vegfest.php

Note that there is a live interview with Brenda Davis on YouTube regarding protein and calcium on the website. *Brenda will be one of the presenters at the Vegfest.*

Salt's Impact on Health

New England Journal of Medicine. 2010;362(7):590-599.

USDA. Dietary Guidelines for Americans. Website accessed Feb. 2010.



Eating too much sodium is linked to health problems, such as high blood pressure, stroke, heart disease, kidney disease, and contributes to osteoporosis (sodium increases calcium excretion).

Sodium is the primary electrolyte (mineral) in the fluid part of the blood and around the body cells. It is essential for helping the body stay properly hydrated, regulating plasma volume, nerve impulses, and muscle contraction. But sodium is not hard to get in the diet. Most Americans eat twice as much salt as is recommended for good health.

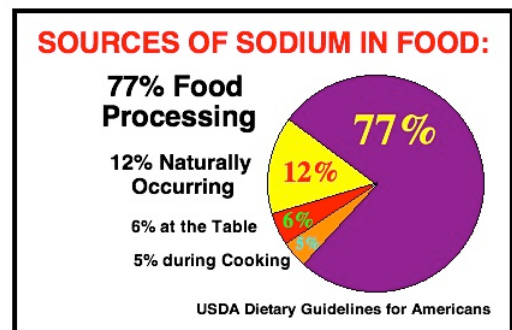
The typical American eats about 3,000 - 5,000 mg of sodium daily, and salt lovers may be getting twice this much! The minimum requirement for sodium is about 500 mg per day. As you can see, people generally eat far too much sodium and need to cut back to less than 2,300 mg/day (less than 1,500 mg/day if you are 50 years old or older, have high blood pressure, or are African American).

As salt (sodium) intake goes up in a nation, so does the risk for high blood pressure, early heart attacks, stroke and early death. New research published in the New England Journal of Medicine estimated the benefit to the health of our nation if we simply reduced salt intake by half (decreasing sodium intake by 1,200 mg/day). The recommended intake for sodium is less than 2,300 mg/day for healthy young individuals, or less than 1,500 mg/day for persons 50 and older, African-Americans, and individuals with elevated blood pressure (120/80 or higher), or persons at increased risk for high blood pressure (obese, inactive, or a family history of high blood pressure).

- New cases of coronary heart disease would decrease by 60,000 per year.
- Strokes would decrease by 32,000 per year.
- Heart attacks would decrease by 54,000 per year.
- Deaths from any cause would decrease by 44,000 every year.

These are conservative estimates, the researchers explained — actual increases may be twice these figures. These are large numbers of preventable death from making such a small change in the American diet.

The problem is not just taking the salt shaker off the table, although that would be a good start. The real problem is that 75 percent of the sodium eaten is added by the food manufacturers. If we want to solve this problem globally, food manufacturers should gradually decrease the amount of salt added to food. If it was done gradually, most people would never know the difference because salt is an acquired taste, and your taste changes when the intake is reduced if it is done gradually.



In the meantime, read food labels. About three-fourths of the sodium in the diet comes from processed foods, added by the food companies. If you choose unprocessed foods, they are very low in sodium, usually only 1 - 10 mg/serving. Read food labels to see how much salt has been added to foods.

Eat more fresh food than canned or processed foods. Avoid or greatly limit salty foods (100+ mg of sodium per serving). Eat fewer salty foods, such as chips, pretzels, pickles, canned soups and canned vegetables, soy sauce, gravies, salad dressing, catsup, and processed foods. Use less salt in your cooking and at the table. Your heart and arteries will thank you and you'll go a long ways to living a healthier, longer life. In fact, the estimate is that this reduction in salt would add another 194,000 quality-adjusted-life-years to Americans and reduce healthcare costs by \$10 billion dollars each year.

Sodium Content of Common Foods

Table salt , 1 tsp – 2358 mg	Pickles, dill, 1 large – 1731 mg
Canned chicken soup, 1 cup – 850 mg	Pizza, 1 piece – 800 mg
Sauerkraut, 1/2 cup – 780 mg	Pretzels, 1 oz – 486 mg
Cottage cheese, 1/2 cup – 459 mg	Sardines, 3 oz – 429 mg
Deli ham, 1 oz – 341 mg	Deli turkey breast, 1 oz – 335 mg
Soy sauce, 1 tsp – 304 mg	Cheese, American, 1 oz – 304 mg
Cornflakes, 1 cup – 298 mg	Olives, black, 5 large – 192 mg
Deli bologna – 295 mg	Potato chips, 1 oz – 183 mg

Recommended intake less than 2,300 mg/day; less than 1,500 mg/day if you are age 50 or older, if your blood pressure is elevated (120/80+), or you are African American.

The bottom line: To be healthier and cut your risk of health problems, limit salt intake. Research shows that you will live longer if you do.

Low Vitamin D Level Tied to Cognitive Decline

Study Shows Elderly People With Higher Vitamin D Levels Performed Better on Mental Tests

By [Charlene Laino](#) WebMD Health News

April 16, 2010 (Toronto) -- Two new studies add to evidence that older people with low levels of [vitamin D](#) may be more likely to suffer from cognitive impairment.

The hope is that vitamin D [supplements](#) may be able to slow mental decline -- an intervention that one research team plans to put to the test this summer.

Vitamin D is best known for helping the body absorb [calcium](#), which restores and strengthens bone, protecting against fracture.

But vitamin D also seems to have anti-inflammatory effects that may help keep blood vessels healthy, ensuring nutrient- and oxygen-rich blood flow to brain cells, says Amie Peterson, MD, of Oregon Health & Science University in Portland.

In addition, the presence of vitamin D receptors throughout the brain suggests that it may directly affect brain tissue, she tells WebMD.

Testing Cognitive Impairment

Still, whether vitamin D has a role in memory and cognition is unclear at this point, Peterson says, and studies have had conflicting results.

To help answer the question, Peterson and colleagues studied about 150 people aged 70 and older



living on their own. Their average age was 85, and about three-fourths were women.

Participants' vitamin D levels ranged from 9 to 90 nanograms per milliliter of blood. Levels of 30 or higher are considered normal, according to Peterson.

All participants were given a standard 30-point test that is used to screen for cognitive impairment.



Results showed that the lower their score on the test, the lower their vitamin D levels.

The average vitamin D level was 42.8 for the 42 participants with a perfect score of 30 on the test; 36.7 for the 89 participants who scored between 27 and 29 ("still normal but lower," says Peterson), and 34.8 for the 21 people with scores of 22 to 26 ("mild cognitive impairment").

The study also showed that lower vitamin D levels were associated with a greater risk of falling.

This summer, Peterson and colleagues plan to embark on a study of people with [Parkinson's disease](#) to look at the effect of vitamin D supplementation on cognition, balance, and gait. Still to be tested is whether the intervention will help older people who are otherwise healthy.

The preceding article is from: <http://www.webmd.com/healthy-aging/news/20100416/low-vitamin-d-level-tied-to-cognitive-decline>

Beans and Colon Cancer Risk

Journal National Black Nurses Association, 200;17(2):6-12. Journal of Nutrition 2006;136(7);1896-1903. American Cancer Society.



Colon cancer is the second leading cause of cancer deaths, but your risk may be significantly reduced by changes in your diet. Both the Polyp Prevention Trial and a study on African-Americans found that legumes protect against colorectal cancer.

The American Cancer Society points out the

importance of eating more fruits and vegetables while reducing the intake of foods high in saturated fat and increasing intake of whole grains. These foods are all high in fiber and are healthy for the bowel.

Legumes are a good source of fiber (the highest of any food group), are high in folic acid (a B-vitamin linked to lower risk of colon cancer), and are loaded with many other phytochemicals that seem to protect against colon cancer formation or growth. If you want to reduce your chances of getting cancer, eat more legumes, including peas, beans, soy, lentils, and garbanzos. They are excellent sources of protein, are inexpensive, and are good alternatives to red meat which numerous health studies have found increases the risk of colon cancer.

Aim to include legumes in your diet at least 3-4 times weekly, daily when possible. Add garbanzos to your salads. Consume lentil and split pea soup for lunch. Enjoy black bean tacos. Add tofu to your stir fry. Munch edamame (green soybeans in the pod, boiled and salted and eaten like peanuts) for a healthy snack. For better health, look for a variety of ways to include more legumes in your daily diet.



SETTLING THE SOY CONTROVERSY

By Dr. Neal Barnard (Article from the *Huffington Post* – 03/28/2010)

Soy products are remarkably versatile. Manufacturers have found ways to turn them into soymilk, veggie burgers, hot dogs, ice cream, yogurt--you name it. One day, they'll probably turn soy into snow tires.

Because soy products are so widely consumed, some people have raised the question as to whether they are safe. The biggest question mark was whether they affect the risk of breast cancer and, for women who have been diagnosed with breast cancer, whether they would help or harm their chances for survival.

After years of research, science is weighing in. Here is what the studies show:

Cancer Prevention and Survival

Women who include soy products in their routines are less likely to develop breast cancer, compared with other women. In January 2008, researchers at the University of Southern California found that women averaging one cup of soymilk or about one-half cup of tofu daily have about a 30 percent less risk of developing breast cancer, compared with women who have little or no soy products in their diets. However, to be effective, the soy consumption may have to occur early in life, as breast tissue is forming during adolescence.

What about women who have already been diagnosed with breast cancer? A study published in the *Journal of the American Medical Association* in 2009 shows that soy products may reduce the risk of recurrence. In a group of 5,042 women previously diagnosed with breast cancer who were participating in the Shanghai Breast Cancer Survival Study over a four-year period, those who regularly consumed soy products, such as soymilk, tofu, or edamame, had a 32 percent lower risk of recurrence and a 29 percent decreased risk of death, compared with women who consumed little or no soy. An accompanying editorial suggested that inconsistencies in prior research may be attributable to the comparatively low soy consumption in the United States, making beneficial effects harder to identify.

Why should soy products reduce cancer risk? Most research has zeroed in on phytoestrogens found in soybeans (phyto means "plant"). These compounds are in some ways similar to the estrogens (female sex hormones) in a woman's bloodstream, but are much weaker. Some have suggested that phytoestrogens attach to the estrogen receptors in a woman's body, blocking her natural estrogens from being able to attach and stopping estrogen's cancer-inducing effects.

By analogy, the estrogens in a woman's body are like jumbo jets that have landed at an airport. Phytoestrogens are like small private planes that are occupying the Jetways, blocking the jumbo jets from attaching. This explanation is probably overly simplistic, but it may serve to illustrate how soy's weak hormonal compounds can have beneficial effects.

Fibroids

Soy products may reduce the risk of fibroids, knots of muscle tissue that form within the thin muscle layer that lies beneath the uterine lining. A study of Japanese women found that the more soy women ate, the less likely they were to need a hysterectomy, suggesting that fibroids were less frequent. In a study of women in Washington State, soy did not seem to help or hurt, perhaps because American women eat very little soy, compared with their Japanese counterparts. What did have a big effect in this study were lignans, a type of phytoestrogens found in flaxseed and whole grains. The women consuming the highest amounts of these foods has less than half the risk of fibroids, compared with the women who generally skipped these foods. So, again, phytoestrogens seem beneficial, countering the effects of a woman's natural estrogens, although in this case the benefit comes from foods other than soy.

Soy and Male Hormones

How about men? Although compounds in soy products have been likened to very weak female hormones, they have no adverse effects on men and may actually help them prevent cancer. A meta-analysis to be published in *Fertility and Sterility*, based on more than 50 treatment groups, showed that neither soy foods nor isoflavone supplements from soy affect testosterone levels in men. An analysis of 14 studies, published in the *American Journal of Clinical Nutrition* showed that increased intake of soy resulted in a 26 percent reduction in prostate cancer risk. Researchers found a 30 percent risk reduction with nonfermented soy products such as soy milk and tofu.

Thyroid Health

Clinical studies show that soy products do not cause hypothyroidism. However, soy isoflavones may take up some of the iodine that the body would normally use to make thyroid hormone. The same is true of fiber supplements and some medications. In theory, then, people who consume soy might need slightly more iodine in their diets (iodine is found in many plant foods, and especially in seaweed and iodized salt.) Also, a note for people with hypothyroidism: Soy products may reduce the absorption of medicines used to treat the condition. People who use these medicines should check with their healthcare providers to see if their doses need to be adjusted.

Other Health Effects

Soy products appear to reduce low density lipoprotein ("bad") cholesterol. They may also reduce the risk of osteoporosis-related hip fractures. In a study published in the *American Journal of Epidemiology*, women who consumed at least one-fourth cup of tofu per day averaged a 30 percent reduction in fracture risk.

Protein: A Little Goes a Long Way

Many soy products are high in protein. Manufacturers have exploited this fact, packing isolated soy



protein into shakes and turning it into meat substitutes. But some have raised the concern that pushing protein intake too high--from any source--might not be wise. The concern is that an overly high protein intake may boost the amount of insulin-like growth factor (IGF-I) in the bloodstream, a phenomenon known to occur with cow's milk. High IGF-I levels are linked to higher cancer risk. Some reassurance comes from the fact that soy intake is linked to lower, not higher, cancer risk, and simple soy products, such as tempeh, edamame, or soynuts, are unlikely to affect IGF-I levels, in any case.

In summary, evidence to date is reassuring. Soy products may reduce the risk of breast cancer and breast cancer recurrence. They do not appear to have adverse effects on male hormone function or on the thyroid gland, but may reduce the absorption of thyroid medications.

Having said that, soy products are certainly not essential. Many people who start a healthful vegan diet, as I and many other doctors recommend, seem to feel they must have soy products. But the fact is, a vegan diet can follow a Mediterranean tradition, focusing on vegetables, fruits, beans and pasta. Or it might follow a Latin American tradition of beans, rice, and corn tortillas. Soy products come from an Asian tradition with many healthful delights and the most enviable health statistics on record. So soy is handy, but it is certainly not essential. If you choose to include soy products in your routine, you'll have science on your side.



Brain Damage (<http://opinionator.blogs.nytimes.com/2010/04/20/brain-damage/>)

Olivia Judson on the influence of science and biology on modern life.

Being fat is bad for your brain.

That, at least, is the gloomy conclusion of several recent studies. For example, one long-term study of more than 6,500 people in northern California found that those who were fat around the middle at age 40 were more likely to succumb to dementia in their 70s. A long-term study in Sweden found that, compared to thinner people, those who were overweight in their 40s experienced a more rapid, and more pronounced, decline in brain function over the next several decades.

Consistent with this, the brains of obese people often show signs of damage. One study of 60 healthy young adults (in their 20s and 30s) found that the fatter members of the group had significantly lower gray-matter densities in several brain regions, including those involved in the perception of taste and the regulation of eating behavior. A study of 114 middle-aged people (aged between 40 and 66) found that the obese tended to have smaller, more atrophied brains than thinner people; other studies have found similar results.

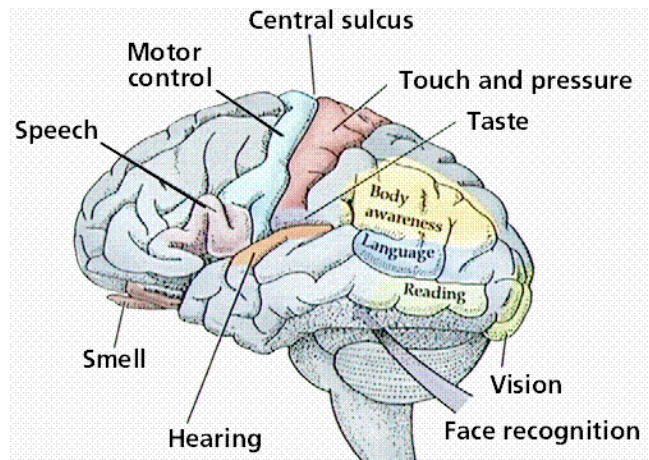
Brains usually atrophy with age, but being obese appears to accelerate the process. This is bad news: pronounced brain atrophy is a feature of dementia.

Why fatness should affect the brain in this way is not clear, although a host of culprits have been suggested. A paper published this week in the early edition of Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences has identified a gene that seems to be involved. FTO, as the gene is known, appears to play a role in both body weight and brain function. This gene comes in different versions; one version — let's call it “troublesome” — appears to predispose people to obesity. Individuals with two copies of the troublesome version tend to be fatter than those with only one copy of it, who in turn tend to be fatter than those with two copies of the “regular” version. Now, the troublesome form has been linked to atrophy in several regions of the brain, including the frontal lobes, though how and why it has this effect remains unknown.

But genes are not the only guilty parties. Obesity exacerbates problems like sleep apnea, which can result in the brain being starved of oxygen; this can lead to brain damage. Obesity often goes along with high blood pressure, heart disease and diabetes, all of which are bad for the brain in their own right. Indeed, one study has shown that if, in middle age, you are obese and have high blood pressure, the two problems gang up on you, increasing the chances of your getting dementia in old age more than either one would do on its own.

Fat tissue itself may be a problem. Fat cells secrete hormones like leptin; leptin acts on the brain in a variety of ways, and is thought to play a role in the development of Alzheimer's. Obesity may thus disrupt the normal production of leptin, with dangerous results. Fat cells also secrete substances that cause inflammation; chronic inflammation of the brain, which is often found in the obese, impairs learning and memory and is also a feature of Alzheimer's.

Diet may play a role, too. Studies in mice have shown that eating a very-high-fat diet increases brain inflammation and disrupts brain function. And the onset of brain decay may itself play a part. Since the regions of the brain most affected by obesity appear to be those involved in self-control and the regulation of appetite, erosion of these abilities may lead to greater obesity, which may lead to more rapid brain erosion, in a downward spiral.



Whatever the causes, the implications are grave. In the United States today, around one-third of adults are obese. At the same time, dementia is already one of the most costly and devastating health problems of old age. The possibility that obesity today will lead to higher rates of dementia in the future is, therefore, deeply alarming.

The obvious question is: can obesity-associated brain damage be reversed? No one knows the answer, but I am hopeful that it can. Those two old friends, a healthful diet and plenty of exercise, have repeatedly been shown to protect the brain. Whether you are fat or thin, young or old, the best hope you have of guarding your brain is to eat well and exercise. Anyone seen my running shoes?

Recipe Corner:

GOLDEN VEGETABLE SOUP

Many of you have the “Optimal Diet” Cookbook and hopefully have been trying some of the recipes. Try this soup recipe from another source – “The 7 Secrets Cookbook.” It is good!

1 onion, diced	1 cup shredded carrots (2-3 large)	3 cups diced potatoes
2 tsp salt	5 cups water	1 cup pasta shells
1 bunch green onions, diced	1 can coconut milk (or 1 cup raw cashew nuts & 1½ cups water)	
1 cup frozen corn	15-ounce can tomatoes in juice	
1 tbsp Chicken Style Seasoning	½ tsp basil	½ tsp dill weed
1 bunch cilantro leaves (optional)		

Variation: Also nice with 1 cup frozen peas thawed and added just before serving.

- Place onion, carrots, potatoes, salt and water in a soup pot and bring to a boil.
- Reduce heat and simmer 8 minutes.
- Add pasta shells, diced green onions, and remaining seasonings. Simmer 8 more minutes.
- Blend coconut milk (or cashew nuts), tomatoes and corn in a blender until smooth.
- Add to soup along with cilantro leaves and heat to serving temperature.

Food for Thought:

“I publicly apologize for the fact that, for several years, I was the personification of meat-eating for the Western World. I sprouted the company line that McDonald’s is a happy place. I didn’t tell kids that hamburgers were bad for their health or the environment. I didn’t tell them that hamburger is ground up dead animals – putrefied rotting flesh on a bun. Instead, I told them that hamburgers grow in a happy hamburger patch. For this I am sorry.” — GEOGGREY GIULIANO”, Former Ronald McDonald actor

“The Beef industry has contributed to more American deaths than all the wars of the century, all the natural disasters, and all automobile accidents combined. If beef is your idea of “real food for real people,” you’d better live real close to a real good hospital.”

— Neal Barnard, M.D., Author, Director of the Physicians Committee for Responsible Medicine

Some Helpful Web Addresses for “Chippers” with Computers:



Local CHIP Website: www.help4bc.ca
National CHIP Website: www.chiphealth.org
Brenda Davis: www.brendadavisrd.com
Dr. John McDougall: www.drmcDougall.com
Dr. Joel Fuhrman: www.DrFuhrman.com
Dr. Neal Barnard: www.pcrm.org



Penticton CHIP mailing address is: PO Box 1081, Penticton BC V2A 6J9 Or phone: (250) 496 - 5966, or email: ckiefiuk@shaw.ca
For local information please see our website at: www.help4bc.ca