

FOOD AND FITNESS

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Inside this issue:

Plant Protein and BP	2
More on Night Eating	2
High Fructose Corn Syrup	3
Recipe Corner	4

Less is More!

Less food, that is, seems to be more beneficial for the health of your heart. This advice is according to a small study from the University of Washington at St. Louis. The study compared the heart function of 25 people who regularly consumed lower calorie diets (1400-2000 calories) to the

heart function of 25 people who regularly consumed higher calorie diets (2000-3000 calories). The lower calorie diet eaters also consumed a healthier Mediterranean type diet, while the higher calorie eaters

consumed a typical American diet.

The low calorie group had heart function that appeared 15 years

younger than their actual ages. Their hearts were more elastic and better able to relax between

(Continued on page 2)



Say It With Chocolate

Surely you've heard that chocolate is good for you! Published in the Swiss Journal

Heart, the latest news comes from a small study where 20 male smokers were given 1.4 oz.

of either dark or white chocolate. Those receiving dark chocolate,

(Continued on page 3)

Web sites of interest:

- win.niddk.nih.gov
- americanheart.org
- mediterranean-diet.gr
- oa.org
- eatright.org
- aicr.org

Plant Protein and Your Blood Pressure

Researchers have long recommended that we eat more plants for better blood pressure control. It was thought that the benefit came from the antioxidants and phytonutrients in plants.



Now researchers at Imperial College of London pin-

point the amino acids (protein building blocks) in plant proteins as being beneficial. In a study conducted in the US, UK, Japan, and China, 4680 subjects aged 40-59 with more plant protein in the diet had lower blood pressures over a 6 week trial period compared to

those with more animal protein in the diet.



Try adding fruit and cereal for breakfast, vegetable soup or a raw vegetable salad with garbanzo beans for

lunch and cooked vegetables and a fruit salad for dinner. See if it lowers your blood pressure!

More on Night Eating

In last month's Food and Fitness we discussed how night snacking could impede weight loss efforts. We also briefly discussed the psychological disorder called "Night Eating". To determine whether there is a real problem with night eat-

ing Sally Squires, a health and nutrition columnist from the "Lean Plate Club" offers these suggestions:

- Do you frequently visit "all you can eat" restaurants?
- Do you have trouble not

knowing when to stop eating?

- Do you have large bedtime snacks to help you sleep?
- Do you stash food in the bedroom?

(Continued on page 5)

Less is More! (continued)

(Continued from page 1)

beats than the hearts of the people with higher calorie diets.

This is the first hu-

man study to confirm the benefits of eating less rather than more. Many animal studies over the years have demonstrated that



feeding animals less prolongs life and decreases disease risk. Visit win.niddk.nih.gov for more information.

Say It With Chocolate (continued)

(Continued from page 1)

upon testing, had improved blood flow through the arteries. In two hours the dark chocolate improved the function of endothelial cells which line the walls of the arteries. Platelet activity, which helps blood clots to form, was also reduced in the dark chocolate eaters. White chocolate showed no benefit. The study was not performed on any non-smokers.

Researchers also note that it may be good for all of us to indulge in the antioxidant benefits of chocolate on a daily basis. Dark chocolate has more antioxidant value than green tea or healthy berries!



Ready to plunge head first into your first box of Valentine's chocolates? Afraid the fat and sugar will cause

obesity and diabetes? Fear not! The Hershey Candy Company plans to introduce a low calorie chocolate candy snack in March 2006 called chocolate sticks. They will be the size of a writing pen and have only 60 calories each.

Happy chocolate eating! If you think dietetic candy won't appeal to your Valentine you'd better say it with flowers!

High Fructose Corn Syrup

Is high fructose corn syrup (HFCS) worse for you than sugar? Some reports have linked the increased use of HFCS to the increase of obesity and diabetes in America.

According to Judith Wylie-Rosette, EdD, RD of the Diabetes Care and Education Practice group of the American Dietetic Association there has indeed been an increase in calorie con-

sumption in America due to increased intake of sweetened beverages. However, it is probably the increased calorie consumption in these sugars, coupled with Americans' inactive lifestyles, that has contributed to increased obesity, not specifically the source of the sugars consumed.

HFCS is often the first or second ingredient listed in many other foods,



such as these energy bars or power bars.

Sugar is sugar.

If you like sweetened foods consider using those sweetened with any of the three nonnutritive sweeteners available—Splenda, Equal, or Sweet 'n' Low to satisfy your sweet tooth without the calories!

Recipe Corner

Whole Wheat Shells with Black Bean Sauce

This combination of whole grains, beans, and tomatoes makes a tasty one-dish meal that can help to lower your blood pressure.



- 2 cups dry whole wheat shell pasta
- 1 3/4 cups water
- 15 oz. can unsalted black beans, rinsed and drained
- 2 14. oz cans peeled, diced unsalted tomatoes with Italian herbs and garlic, with juice
- 1/2 tsp. chili powder
- 1 tsp. cumin
- 4 Tbs. Parmesan cheese

Combine all ingredients in a shallow microwaveable container. Cover and microwave on high for 15-18 minutes or until shell

pasta is tender. Stir well and serve each portion with 1 Tbs. grated Parmesan cheese.

Nutrition information per serving:

Calories	372
Fat, g	3

Saturated fat, g	1
Protein, g	17
Cholesterol, mg	4



Carbohydrate, g	70
Sodium, mg	196
Dietary fiber, g	12

For lower sodium in recipe you may use unsalted diced tomatoes and fresh soaked black beans instead of canned black

beans.

Chocolate Banana Cup

- 6 cups ripe mashed banana
- 1 cup silken tofu
- 2 Tbs. unsweetened cocoa powder

- 1 tsp. vanilla
- 2 Tbs. brown sugar (may use Splenda)

Place all ingredients in a blender and process until smooth. Portion into individual dishes and chill for at least one hour. Garnish with fat free whipped cream.

Nutrition information per serving:

Calories	158
Fat, g	2
Saturated fat, g	0
Protein, g	4
Cholesterol, mg	0
Carbohydrate, g	36
Sodium, mg	10
Dietary fiber, g	3

Recipes from



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**Food and
Fitness
and Fitness**

More on Night Eating (continued)

(Continued from page 2)

She also offers these steps to help combat the problem:

- Eat breakfast—breakfast skippers are more likely to binge later.
- Eat at least 3 meals a day—it may help cut down on



the urge to binge later.

- Close the kitchen after dinner—set a time after which nothing comes out of the kitchen.
- Don't eat in front of the television—this is often mindless eating, rather than eating for hunger.

- See a therapist—the reasons for overeating are often tied to depression, anxiety or other emotional problems. The overeating may be a symptom of a larger problem that would benefit from psychotherapy.

For more information on controlling emotional eating visit Overeaters' Anonymous at www.oa.org.