

# NATURE'S BIN

*Naturally*

## Natural Insights for Well Being®

August 2013

### Keeping Eyes Healthy

The latest results from several large, long-term studies

#### Long-term antioxidants reduce AMD chances

Age-related macular degeneration (AMD), where sight deteriorates in the center of the field of vision, is the most common form of age-related blindness. Doctors believe antioxidants can slow the disease, and several long-term studies tested the effects of these supplements.

The basic eye supplement included 500 mg of vitamin C, 400 IU vitamin E, 15 mg beta-carotene, 80 mg zinc, and 2 mg copper per day.

In the first study, 3,549 participants with early-stage AMD took the antioxidant supplement, with or without the zinc, or a placebo. After 10 years, those who had taken the antioxidants, with or without zinc, were 25-30 percent less likely to develop advanced AMD. Also, those who did take zinc were less likely to have passed away, especially from circulatory diseases.

In the second study, 4,203 participants who were more likely to progress to advanced AMD took the basic antioxidant formula, with or without beta-carotene, plus 10 mg of lutein and 2 mg of zeaxanthin; 350 mg of DHA with 650 mg of EPA, these four antioxidants together, or a placebo.

After five years, while there was no overall effect on advanced AMD, those



who had taken lutein and zeaxanthin instead of beta-carotene were slightly less likely to have advanced AMD compared to those who had taken beta-carotene.

Also, former smokers in the study who had taken beta-carotene had a higher incidence of lung cancer than those who had not. Doctors concluded lutein and zeaxanthin could be an appropriate substitute for beta-carotene in the antioxidant eye formula.

#### Lutein and zeaxanthin reduce cataract surgery

In a separate analysis of the second study, above, doctors ranked the 4,203 participants according to lutein and zeaxanthin in the diet. Those who got the least lutein and zeaxanthin from their diets were 32 percent less likely to need cataract surgery after adding lutein and zeaxanthin supplements.

REFERENCE: OPHTHALMOLOGY; APRIL, 2013, ELECTRONIC PREPUBLICATION

AUGUST'S

### Healthy Insight

### Good Gazpacho!

The individual ingredients in gazpacho, the cold and tangy tomato-based soup, have been shown to lower blood pressure in earlier studies. In this study, researchers measured the diets of 3,995 men and women with higher than normal chances of heart trouble, most of whom also had high blood pressure. On average, for every additional 9-ounce serving of gazpacho per week, chances of developing high blood pressure declined by 15 percent, and those who consumed the most gazpacho were 27 percent less likely to develop high blood pressure compared to those who did not eat gazpacho. The nutrients in gazpacho appear to lower blood pressure despite the salt content, doctors said.

REFERENCE: NUTRITION, METABOLISM & CARDIOVASCULAR DISEASES; NOVEMBER, 2012, ELECTRONIC PREPUBLICATION

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# Healthy Women

## Nutrients improve metabolism, reduce chances of fibroids

### Vitamin A and thyroid

The thyroid releases hormones that stimulate metabolism in every cell in the body. Vitamin A helps regulate thyroid hormones and doctors wanted to test its effect on obese individuals, who commonly have low thyroid function, or hypothyroidism.

In the study, 28 non-obese healthy premenopausal women took 25,000 IU of vitamin A (retinyl palmitate) per day while 56 obese healthy premenopausal women took the vitamin A or a placebo. Doctors measured levels of thyroid-stimulating hormone, which is higher when the thyroid is underactive and lower when thyroid function is normal.

After four months, both obese and non-obese women who had taken vitamin A had much lower levels of thyroid-stimulating hormone, and

higher levels of circulating thyroid hormones. Doctors concluded that vitamin A may reduce early-stage hypothyroidism in premenopausal women.

### Vitamin D and fibroids

Fibroids are non-cancerous tumors that form a mass in the uterus of premenopausal women. In this study, doctors measured vitamin D levels and sun exposure in 1,036 black and white women, aged 35 to 49, and used ultrasound to detect uterine fibroids.

Half of the white women had sufficient levels of vitamin D, which doctors said was at least 20 nanograms per milliliter of blood, while 10 percent of black women had sufficient levels.

Compared to those whose vitamin D levels were low, women with sufficient

circulating vitamin D levels were 32 percent less likely to have a fibroid, regardless of race.

In 2011, the U.S. increased its recommended dietary allowance for vitamin D to 600 IU per day for most people.

REFERENCE: EPIDEMIOLOGY; 2013, VOL. 24, No. 3, 447-53



## Breast Health

### Nutrients may improve breast health and reduce cancer chances

#### Antioxidant carotenoids

Many earlier studies have found carotenoids, the colorful red, orange, and yellow pigments in plants and other food sources, reduce chances of breast cancer. In this analysis, doctors reviewed eight studies covering more than 80 percent of published investigations worldwide, including 3,055 women with breast cancer and compared to 3,956 similar healthy women.



Overall, compared to women with the lowest carotenoid levels, women with the highest circulating levels of all carotenoids were 19 percent less likely to develop breast cancer.

For individual carotenoids, compared to those with the lowest levels, women with the highest circulating levels of alpha-carotene were 13 percent less likely to develop breast cancer, for beta-carotene, 17 percent less likely, lutein and zeaxanthin, 16 percent, and lycopene, 22 percent.

#### Isoflavones

Isoflavones are plant based nutrients. In this review, doctors analyzed findings from several studies covering 3,101 postmenopausal women with breast cancer and compared them

to 3,471 similar healthy women. The studies included low and high doses of isoflavones from soy, red clover, garlic, and evening primrose, together or separately.

Overall compared to placebo, women who took isoflavones for at least five years were 25 percent less likely to develop breast cancer. Women who took average doses lower than 25 mcg per day saw no benefit, while women who took at least 676 mcg per day had 28 percent lower chances of developing breast cancer, improving to 43 percent lower after five years. Isoflavones do not increase breast cancer chances and may help reduce postmenopausal breast cancer, doctors said.

REFERENCE: BRITISH JOURNAL OF CANCER; 2013, VOL. 132, No. 6, 1439-50

# Major Magnesium Benefits

## Better blood sugar, insulin levels, and less severe stroke

### An essential nutrient

Magnesium is the fourth most abundant mineral in the body, involved in more than 300 biochemical reactions that help maintain normal muscle and nerve function, heart rhythm, and a healthy immune system.



### Blood sugar and insulin levels

Doctors analyzed 15 studies covering 53,000 non-diabetic men and women. For every 50 mg per day increase in magnesium, fasting levels of glucose and insulin were measurably lower. Doctors saw the magnesium benefits regardless of age, gender, alcohol or calorie consumption, smoking, or body weight.

Doctors also looked at genetic differences, since earlier studies found certain variations in DNA can affect glucose, insulin, and magnesium metabolism. But researchers found the glucose and insulin benefits regardless of DNA variations, suggesting magnesium works independently of genetics.

### Reducing stroke severity

Researchers in this study analyzed the lifestyles, heart health history, and

conducted a complete physical exam on 1,493 people with acute ischemic stroke, where blood supply to part of the brain is decreased. Those with more severe stroke symptoms, or who later died from stroke, had lower blood levels of magnesium than those with less severe stroke symptoms or survivors.

Compared to those with the lowest levels, those with the highest circulating levels of magnesium were 53 percent less likely to have a severe stroke or to pass away from stroke. Researchers found that the benefits of magnesium persisted regardless of age, gender, blood levels of calcium, potassium, or any other circulating blood factors, and extended to those with better-than-average levels of magnesium.

REFERENCE: JOURNAL OF NUTRITION; JANUARY, 2013, ELECTRONIC PREPUBLICATION

## Ahead of the Curve

### Early-Stage Discoveries: Apple Peel, Cocoa Powder, and Grape Powder

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

#### Apple peel may help treat irritable bowel syndrome

Doctors don't know what causes irritable bowel syndrome but say that an inflammatory gene called "IP10" plays a role. Researchers exposed highly inflamed human colon cancer cells to each of the three anti-inflammatory compounds in apple peel and found, as apple peel concentrations increased, IP10 expression decreased.

#### Cocoa antioxidants protect brain cells

Oxidative stress plays a role in neurological disorders such as

Parkinson's and Alzheimer's disease (AD). Researchers exposed human AD cells to cocoa polyphenols, which activated nerve-cell survival pathways, encouraging new nerve-cell growth, and decreasing oxidative nerve-cell damage.

#### Grape powder reduces metabolic syndrome factors

The standard American-style diet can lead to obesity and type 2 diabetes. Overweight rats got the diet with or without grape powder. After 90 days, the grape powder group had much less C-reactive protein and other signs of inflammation, particularly in the liver

and abdominal fat tissue. The grape powder group also had less fat weight in the liver, kidney and abdomen, and increased antioxidant activity in the kidney and liver.

REFERENCE: JOURNAL OF CELLULAR BIOCHEMISTRY; MARCH, 2013, ELECTRONIC PREPUBLICATION





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## Good-for-You Gazpacho

Enjoy this cool summer soup while you read a new study on page 1 that found gazpacho lowered chances of developing high blood pressure.

**Ingredients:**

4 tomatoes, quartered	2 or 3 sprigs cilantro, minced, (optional)
1/2 green pepper, seeded and cubed	1/2 c cold water
1/2 cucumber, sliced	2 tbsp tarragon wine vinegar (or your favorite flavor)
1/2 onion, sliced	2 tbsp olive oil
2 stalks celery, chopped	1 tsp salt
3 scallions, sliced	1/2 tsp Worcestershire sauce
2 sprigs parsley, minced	1/4 tsp black pepper
2 cloves of garlic, chopped	

**Directions:** Wash and prepare veggies. Place in blender or food processor and blend for 12 to 15 seconds. Chill for one hour. Serves 2.

## Thanks for shopping with us!

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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