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LIPID CLINIC NEWS

Volume 20, Number 1

May 2005

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Salt: The Forgotten Killer

Salt has been a hot topic in our department ever since it was directly linked to high blood pressure and heart disease, but lately the topic of salt is more than just hot – it's boiling! A non-profit organization, the Center for Science in the Public Interest (CSPI) tried to get the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) to set reasonable limits for the amount of added salt to processed foods. The FDA said they were working on it. Nothing has happened for 20 years! Now CSPI is suing the FDA!

The CSPI reports that a high-salt diet is directly related to about 150,000 premature deaths each year. The medical community agrees that diets high in sodium are a major cause of hypertension. Americans spend more than \$15 billion dollars each year to treat hypertension, yet the government spends very little to reduce our country's intake of sodium. Who is the CSPI blaming? The FDA for not regulating the food industry.

Many of our patients have been working on reducing the sodium in their diets for years by focusing on reducing the amount of salt they add while cooking or at the table from their salt shakers. While this is a great place to start, only 11% of sodium in most Americans' diets is added during cooking or at the table, while more than 80% comes from processed foods and foods cooked and served in restaurants.

Our society is convenience-driven. We're doing more eating on the run, and less cooking at home because we lead very busy lives! Even those of us who make the effort to sit down to a healthy meal probably use some convenience foods to help make that meal happen more quickly, like canned chicken broth, a boxed rice mix, or a frozen pre-seasoned chicken breast. We all use these foods – but what price are we paying for these time savers?

We need to let our dollars speak for us when we buy food at the grocery store. Not only do we need to look at the Nutrition Facts on the label for fat and sugar, but we also need to be looking at the sodium content of the foods we're buying. Our goal is to have no more than 1800 mg sodium daily for women, and 2400 mg sodium for men. To break it down, we recommend 600 mg of sodium for one serving of a main dish and no more than 500 mg of sodium per serving of all other dishes. We also recommend choosing snack foods that have less than 200 mg of sodium per serving.

While convenience foods are almost impossible to completely remove from our diets, choosing low-sodium products and avoiding products that don't have low-sodium options shows the food industry that it needs to stand up and pay attention to the amount of salt they're adding to their foods.

Our take on the CSPI's approach to resolving this forgotten killer? We absolutely support what they're trying to do! We agree that the FDA needs to do something to motivate the food industry to produce foods that are lower in sodium. Plus, YOU also need to take responsibility for the foods you choose to purchase for yourself and your family. This means taking the time to read ingredient labels, pre-planning your meals so you don't have to grab something to eat on your way home, and cooking from fresh ingredients whenever possible.

Our Sodium Recommendations

1 serving	mg sodium/serving/person
Main dish	less than 600
Side dish	less than 500
Snack foods	less than 200

Revised US Dietary Guidelines

“Exercise 90 Minutes a Day.” “Go With The Grains.” “Eat Less, Exercise More.” These were just a few of the headlines highlighting the revised 2005 *Dietary Guidelines for Americans*. Whether you’ve never heard of the Dietary Guidelines or follow them religiously, we’d like to give you our interpretation of the revisions and what we think are the most important parts. Please note that these guidelines are for the general population; some are slightly different than our Lipid Clinic guidelines which are for people at greater risk for heart disease.

What are the Dietary Guidelines?

The *Dietary Guidelines for Americans 2005* is a 71-page report issued by the Departments of Health and Human Services and Agriculture. By federal law, the guidelines must be revised every five years. They are the basis of federal food and nutrition education programs, and are intended to go hand-in-hand with the Food Guide Pyramid.

How Do The 2005 Guidelines Differ from 2000 Guidelines?

In a nutshell, the revised guidelines place more emphasis on reducing calorie consumption and increasing physical activity. They focus more on “cups” of fruits and vegetables rather than “servings”, which are more difficult for people to visualize. Recommendations for specific population groups, such as children and pregnant women, are also included in the revised report. However, the guidelines discussed in this article are for adults.

What’s This About 90 Minutes of Exercise?

This headline caught the attention of many people (it certainly grabbed ours). The reality is, while 90 minutes a day may be optimal, not everyone needs to exercise that much. The following guidelines are for most (preferably all) days of the week:

- 30 minutes/day: to reduce risk of chronic disease
- 60 minutes/day: to help manage body weight and prevent weight gain in adulthood
- 60-90 minutes/day: to sustain weight loss for previously overweight or obese individuals

It is important to remember that physical activity can be accumulated throughout the day in shorter bouts; it does not have to mean taking a 60 or 90 minute exercise class daily. Think of exercise as a piggy bank: it doesn’t matter if you put 4 quarters or 1 dollar in the bank—the result is the same.

Food Group Highlights:

Whole Grains: Whole grains are an important source of fiber and other nutrients. The new recommendation is to consume 3 or more “ounce-equivalents” of whole-grain products per day. (An ounce equivalent is 1 slice bread, 1 cup dry cereal or ½ cup cooked rice or pasta). In general, at least

half of our grain intake should come from whole grains. Examples: whole wheat, brown rice, oatmeal, popcorn.

Dairy Products: The new guidelines recommend the equivalent of 3 cups per day of fat-free or low-fat milk (an increase from the previous recommendation to consume 2 to 3 servings per day).

Fruits and Vegetables: For people eating 2,000 calories a day, the guidelines are to consume 2 cups of fruit and 2 ½ cups of vegetables a day. (There has been a shift in the guidelines from servings to cups; it’s probably easier for people to visualize a cup of broccoli than a serving).

Meat, Poultry, Dried Beans: The guidelines recommend eating 5 ½ ounces of poultry, lean meat, fish, beans or nuts per day.

What Do the Guidelines Say About Fats?

The guidelines emphasize that both the type and amount of fat are important to heart health. For adults, between 20-35% calories should come from fats, with less than 10% of calories from saturated fats and less than 300 mg/day from cholesterol. They also advise limiting intake of *trans* fatty acids, found in processed foods and oils. (If you’ve met with one of our Lipid Clinic dietitians, you’ve probably noticed that these guidelines are more liberal than our recommendation of 20% of total calories from fats, with no more than 5% from saturated fats and 100 mg cholesterol.)

What About Sodium And Potassium?

The key recommendations are to consume less than 2,300 mg of sodium (approximately 1 teaspoon of salt) per day, and to consume a potassium-rich diet, which actually blunts the effects of sodium on blood pressure. This means choosing and preparing foods with little salt while consuming potassium rich foods like fruits and vegetables.

So What’s The Take-Home Message?

We’ve said it before, we’ll say it again. An eating style built around vegetables, fruits, beans and whole grains, with moderate amounts of lean meats and dairy products, is the foundation of a healthy eating style. Eat less, move more and make every calorie count!



Lipid Clinic News Goes Electronic!

Starting with the next newsletter, we will be switching primarily to an *electronic newsletter*. This means that unless you are a paid subscriber, you will no longer receive a hard copy of the newsletter in the mail!

- In the future, you will find the Lipid Clinic News at: www.ohsu.edu/medicine/divisions/endo/lipidnews
- If you wish to receive quarterly e-mail reminders when a new issue is posted, please send your e-mail address to lcnews@ohsu.edu and we will put you on our listserv. Or, check the website every 3 months (end of March, June, September, December) for the latest issue (or anytime for past issues).
- The newsletter content will remain the same—you'll find the same great, up-to-date scientific information regarding lipids and nutrition. Only the delivery mode will be different.
- The good news is that if you misplace an issue, you can go online and it's right at your fingertips, FREE of charge! Past issues will be posted on the web page from the year 2000 forward.
- For those who have recently renewed a subscription, look for a copy in the mail until your subscription expires—however, it will be in black and white.

We appreciate all of our loyal subscribers and readers and hope that you'll join us as we go electronic!

Research Highlights

Whole Grain Intake and Coronary Heart Disease

Previous studies indicate that a daily intake of 3 servings of whole grain foods is associated with a reduced risk of coronary heart disease (CHD), the amount recommended in the 2005 Dietary Guidelines. However, these studies have not addressed the effects of adding wheat bran or wheat germ, both components of whole grains, on the risk of CHD.

In a recent study published in *American Journal of Clinical Nutrition*, researchers evaluated the association of whole grain, bran and germ intakes with the incidence of CHD. They studied almost 43,000 male health professionals ages 40 to 75 years, who did not have CHD, cancer or diabetes at the beginning of the study. Daily intakes of whole-grain, bran and germ were determined using a dietary questionnaire. During 14 years of follow-up, cases of heart disease were reported and evaluated in relation to whole grain intake.

The study supports the inverse relationship between whole-grain intake and CHD (in other words, the greater the whole-grain intake, the lower the risk of CHD). It also suggests that the *bran* component of whole grain (see picture) could be an important factor in this relationship. Added *germ*, however, was not associated with CHD risk.

Bottom Line: Intake of whole-grain and bran are important modifiable risk factors for CHD. This study is an important reminder to consume at least 3 servings of whole grains daily.

New Product Review

This is our favorite part of the newsletter—new products! Our team of registered dietitians is always on the lookout for healthy new products that make it a little easier to improve the nutritional quality of our diets.

Cereal Toppers

In our last newsletter, we mentioned adding frozen berries to hot cereal to boost fiber intake. But what about those of us who enjoy cold cereal in the morning? Frozen berries just won't cut it! We've now discovered Cereal Toppers, which are bags of freeze-dried fruit—combinations of apples, strawberries, bananas, whole blueberries or raspberries. Each serving provides 1 to 4 grams of fiber, depending on the fruit. Great on cereal, mixed into yogurt or smoothies, or eaten right out of the bag as a crunchy snack. You can find these yummy additions in the cereal aisle of most stores.

Orville Redenbacher's Smart Pop Kettle Korn

Have you discovered this yummy snack? It tastes so good, you won't believe it's light! For 3 cups, it's only 60 Calories, 1 g fat and 160 mg sodium -- not bad for microwave popcorn. With a slightly sweet, slightly salty flavor, your taste buds will be delighted. Another plus - 2.5 grams of fiber per serving - a snack that helps you boost your whole grain and fiber intake! The downside--it's hard to stop eating so share it with your entire family!

Trader Joe's Baby Green Beans

It just wouldn't be an issue of Lipid Clinic News without mentioning *something* from Trader Joe's. Our dietitians recently discovered these bags of baby beans that are so easy to prepare. You just snip the bag in the corner, microwave 3 to 4 minutes, and you've got a tasty vegetable side dish. Try topping them with a few sprays of . . .

"I Can't Believe It's Not Butter Spray" or "I Can't Believe It's Not Butter Garlic and Herb Flavored Spray"

The original "butter" spray has been around so long that it doesn't qualify as a new product, but with the introduction of the garlic and herb flavored variety, we thought it would be great to mention here. Over the years we have heard many uses for the butter spray: toast, pancakes, steamed vegetables and air-popped popcorn to name a few. The sky's the limit here. Try the garlic and herb version on grilled vegetables, corn on the cob, French bread or baked potatoes. Let us know what you think.

Easy Couscous Paella

Another big hit in our office. While many of us love paella, we don't prepare it often because it takes too much time. This version is so simple and uses lots of ingredients you might already have on hand.

1 tablespoon olive oil
1 medium onion, chopped
3 cloves garlic, chopped
1 ½ cups (1 medium) chopped red bell pepper
1 ½ cups (1 medium) chopped yellow bell pepper
½ teaspoon (or less) Lite Salt
½ teaspoon black pepper
½ teaspoon dried thyme
¼ to ½ teaspoon red pepper flakes
½ teaspoon ground turmeric
1 can (14 ½ ounces) lower-salt chicken broth
1 cup water
1 box (10 ounce) frozen peas, thawed
½ pound raw, shelled shrimp
½ pound cooked chicken breast
1 box (10 ounce) uncooked couscous
1 can (2.25 ounce) sliced black olives



Heat oil in heavy soup pot. Add onion, garlic and bell peppers; cook until peppers are tender (about 8 minutes.) Add Lite Salt, black pepper, thyme, pepper flakes and turmeric; cook 1 minute. Add broth, water, peas, shrimp and chicken. Bring to boil, reduce heat cover and simmer approximately 2 minutes.

Remove from heat. Stir in couscous and cover. Let stand 5 minutes. Top with sliced black olives and serve. Leftovers are great. Makes 6 generous servings.

~ Per Serving ~

Calories 350	Saturated Fat 1 gm
Sodium 126 mg	Cholesterol 77 mg
Fiber 5 gm	Cholesterol-Saturated Fat Index 5
Total Fat 6 gm	

