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Quantity of Fat is Important

It is important to avoid dietary saturated and trans fats, but the total intake of "healthy" fats may need to be limited too. Here's why the amount of fat we eat is so very important. When we eat fat ("healthy" or "unhealthy" fat) it is broken down and absorbed by the intestinal tract. The fat is repackaged into a lipoprotein called a chylomicron and sent into the bloodstream. As the chylomicrons pass through the arteries and veins some of the triglyceride is removed for use by the fat cells, muscles, heart, brain and other organs. Excess blood fat may be stored away in fat cells.

It takes 4 to 6 hours for most people to process and clear dietary fat from the blood. This time is increased to 8-12 hours or longer for people who have high blood triglycerides and/or diabetes. Three harmful things can happen during the time your body is processing dietary fat:

One – atherosclerotic plaque may grow

Harmful remnant particles may remain in the blood after dietary fat is removed from the blood (chylomicron remnants and VLDL remnants). It is hypothesized that remnant particles can be picked up by the scavenger receptor in the artery wall and lead to build up of plaque.

Two – risk for blood clots may be higher

If the particles contain saturated or omega-6 fats they can make the blood platelets stickier. Levels of blood clotting factors may also increase during absorption of dietary fat. This can increase the risk of forming a blood clot that can block the flow of blood and cause a heart attack or stroke.

Three – HDL may remove less cholesterol

A study reported at the American Heart Association meeting in November 2006 showed that linoleic acid (an omega-6 unsaturated fat) and oleic acid (olive oil is high in this fat) reduced the amount of cholesterol removed by HDL from cultured cells. This happened because of a decrease in the ABCA1 cholesterol transporter that is needed for HDL to remove cholesterol from the cell.

It is unknown whether the same thing happens in our bodies, but it is possible that a high fat meal might temporarily reduce the ability of HDL to remove cholesterol from our arteries. Over many years, such an effect hypothetically might lead to increased accumulation of cholesterol in our arteries, and higher risk of heart attack and stroke, but more studies are needed. The risk is probably higher in patients with diabetes and/or high blood triglycerides.

AND – You might gain more weight

A higher fat diet provides more calories per bite and may promote overeating in some people. This is still controversial, but a high fat diet might increase your chances of gaining weight over the long term.

Translation of the Science to the Practical

We can avoid the pitfalls just described by:

- Keeping a lid on the amount of fat that we eat, including olive oil and other "healthy" oils
- Replacing the fat with vegetables, fruits, beans and other legumes and whole grains
- Probably losing a few pounds by moving around more and watching portion sizes

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The Latest on the Atkins and Other Weight Loss Diets



“Which diet will help me lose more weight?” This is a question we hear a lot at Lipid Clinic. It seems like people these days are always looking for the quickest and easiest weight loss strategies. It’s not surprising that a recent article from the *Journal of the American Medical Association* got lots of press. Researchers called it the, “the A to Z Weight Loss Study.” They looked at four different diets: the Atkins, Zone, Ornish and LEARN to compare the amount of weight loss over a 12 month period. Overall the weight loss was modest. The average weight loss for the yearlong study was 10 pounds for the Atkins group and about 4-6 pounds for each of the other groups.

After taking a closer look at the study, we discovered that the subjects seemed to have had a difficult time following any of the diets for a whole year. By the end of the study none of the groups was following the recommended diet. The Atkins group was the only group that came close to following their diet. Why?

People may have an easier time following Atkins’ type diets because they include foods that are typical to American culture, i.e. meat and cheese. Diets that promote high complex carbohydrates and fiber and low fat include foods that are not typical of an American diet. Most of us don’t eat beans, whole grains and vegetables at every meal. Naturally it is easier to eat foods that are familiar than foods you have never eaten before.

This study simply adds to the evidence that most weight loss diets fail over the long run! People go on a diet, stay on it as long as humanly possible, return to their old eating style and wait for the next diet to come along.

Conclusion

We still think that a diet that is low in saturated fat and cholesterol and high in fiber (fruits, vegetables, whole grains and beans) is the healthiest approach to weight loss. Maintaining a healthy body weight isn’t about a quick fix diet. It’s a lifestyle change that takes time and a little creativity in the kitchen. The next time you decide to take the challenge and lose weight; try finding your inspiration in a new cookbook that features lower fat and higher fiber recipes.

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More of this

Less of this



More Support for Eating Fewer Fatty Foods and More Vegetables and Salads

Dietary patterns associated with developing type 2 diabetes was studied in 31,641 adults (Melbourne Australia Collaborative Cohort Study). None of the subjects had diabetes, high blood glucose, chest pain (angina), or had suffered a heart attack before the study started. From 1990-1994 diabetes was found in 365 of the subjects. Four dietary patterns were identified from 124 foods and beverages. Two of the patterns were associated with developing diabetes:

Meats and fatty foods:

Higher amounts were associated with developing diabetes.

Salad and cooked vegetables:

Lower amounts were associated with developing diabetes.

Conclusion

We agree with the authors who recommended having a dietary pattern that includes salad and cooked vegetables and one that avoids meats and fatty foods.



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Product Review

Canola Harvest Margarine



In the September 2004 issue of Lipid Clinic News, we reported that Canola Harvest Margarine was high in trans fat. The product has been reformulated:

| Canola Harvest Margarine | | | | |
|--------------------------|----------|---------------------------|---------|---------|
| Date | Sat. Fat | Trans Fat 1 tablespoon | Omega-6 | Omega-3 |
| 2004 | 1.6 g | 3.3 g | 1.0 g | trace |
| 2007 | 1.5 g | 0.0 g | 2.0 g | 0.7 |

This margarine is now a good choice:

- It continues to be low in saturated fat
- It has 0 grams trans fat per tablespoon
- It is now rich in both essential fatty acids (omega-6 and omega-3)

Keen About Quinoa (keen-wa)

This tiny grain has been around for over five thousand years, but most people couldn't tell you much about it! Quinoa comes from the Andes Mountains in the South



American countries of Peru, Bolivia, Ecuador, and Chile. It was originally a staple in the Incan diet - so important that it was deemed the "Mother Grain". Indeed, quinoa boasts an impressive nutritional profile. Not only is it packed with fiber, magnesium, phosphorus, and iron, but it is a good source of protein. Quinoa's impressive protein quality is superior to that of any other grain. It is also a great way to get your whole grains in and is low in fat and sodium. For those who have wheat or gluten intolerances, quinoa is a perfect choice, as it is gluten free and easily digestible!

Quinoa has a fluffy and crunchy texture and a delicious slightly nutty flavor. It's simple to prepare and cooks in about 10-15 minutes; it can be used in almost anything! Try it as a cereal, in soup, or in baking. It also makes a nice substitute for rice or couscous. However, make sure that you thoroughly rinse your quinoa before using it to remove the bitter outermost part, called saponin. We've come up with a delicious recipe for you to try, Quinoa-Poblano Chiles, and we think you'll like them!

Quina-Poblano Chiles

- 4 (5-inch) poblano chiles (bell peppers also work)
- 1 1/2 cups low sodium tomato or V8 juice or water
- 3/4 cup uncooked quinoa
- Nonstick cooking Spray
- 1/2 cup chopped green bell peppers
- 1/2 cup chopped red bell peppers
- 1/2 cup chopped onion
- 2 teaspoons minced seeded jalapeño pepper
- 2 garlic cloves, minced
- 2 tablespoons unsalted pumpkin seed kernels, pine nuts, or slivered almonds
- 1/2 cup minced green onions
- 2 tablespoons minced fresh or 2 teaspoons dried cilantro
- 1 tablespoon lower sodium soy sauce
- 1/2 teaspoon (or less) Lite Salt
- 1 tablespoon freshly squeezed lime juice
- 2 cups low sodium tomato or V8 juice
- 1/2 cup (2 ounces) shredded reduced-fat sharp Cheddar cheese



To Prepare: Cut chiles in half lengthwise; remove stems and seeds. Place pepper halves in a 9-by-13-inch baking dish, cover, and cook in the microwave oven on high for 4 minutes. Set aside.

Rinse quinoa. Combine 1 1/2 cups tomato or V8 juice or water and quinoa in a medium saucepan; bring to a boil.

Cover, reduce heat, and simmer 15 minutes or until liquid is absorbed. Set aside.

Spray a large nonstick skillet with cooking spray; place over medium-high heat until hot. Add bell peppers, onion, jalapeño pepper, and garlic; sauté 2 minutes. Add pumpkin seed kernels, pine nuts, or slivered almonds; sauté 2 minutes. Remove from heat; stir in quinoa, green onions, cilantro, soy sauce, Lite Salt, and lime juice. Spoon 1/3 cup quinoa mixture into each chile half.

Pour 2 cups tomato or V8 juice into the baking dish; place stuffed chiles in dish. Cover and cook in microwave oven until heated through, 5 to 10 minutes. Sprinkle cheese over chiles; cook, uncovered in microwave oven, until cheese melts. Spoon tomato or V8 juice over chiles.

Makes 4 servings

Per serving:

| | |
|-------------------------------------|-----------------------|
| Calories: 261 | Total Fat: 6 gm |
| Sodium: 425 mg | Saturated Fat: 1.5 gm |
| Fiber: 5g | Cholesterol: 3 mg |
| Cholesterol Saturate d Fat Index: 2 | |

WelChol and Cholestyramine

Not the Ideal

Many patients take WelChol or Cholestyramine in the morning and at night. This may not allow the medicine to act most efficiently and may not lower the blood cholesterol as much as it could.

Why?

The liver makes bile acids from cholesterol. The bile acids become part of bile, which is stored in the gall bladder. Release of bile into the intestinal tract increases in response to eating food, especially fat. WelChol and Cholestyramine bind to the bile acids and cause some of them to be excreted in the stool, resulting in decreased return of bile acids to the liver. This causes the liver to produce more bile acids from cholesterol, which helps lower the blood cholesterol level.

The Ideal

WelChol and Cholestyramine work best if they are taken with meals – breakfast, lunch and dinner. In this way the drug will be present to bind up as much of the bile acids as possible. Fortunately, the cholesterol lowering effects are similar when Welchol is taken once or twice daily, but taking these drugs with meals will help you avoid side effects and achieve the maximal blood cholesterol and LDL lowering.

White Bean and Kale Soup

Be sure to make this soup 2-3 days ahead. This allows for the flavors to mingle. One cup of this soup contains 10 mg lutein and zeaxanthin – the pigments found in the macula of the eye.

2 cups (1 pound) Great Northern beans
2 cups coarsely chopped onions
2 tablespoons olive oil
4 garlic cloves, finely chopped
3 cans (14 ½ ounces each) lower-salt chicken broth
8 cups water
1 (2 x 3 inch) piece Parmesan cheese rind (optional)
2 teaspoons (or less) Lite Salt
½ teaspoon black pepper
1 bay leaf
1 teaspoon finely chopped fresh rosemary or ½ teaspoon dried rosemary
4 cups chopped carrots (cut in half lengthwise and then crosswise in ½ inch pieces)
2 bunches (1 pound) lacinato kale, stems and center ribs discarded and leaves coarsely chopped

Directions:

In a large pot, cover beans with water by 2 inches. Bring to a boil. Remove from heat and let stand, uncovered for 1 hour.

Cook onions in oil in an 8-quart pot over moderate heat, stirring frequently until onions are translucent, about 5 minutes. Add garlic and cook while stirring 1 minute. Add beans, broth, 4 cups water, cheese rind (if using), Lite Salt, pepper, bay leaf and rosemary. Bring to a boil, reduce heat and simmer uncovered until beans are just tender, about 1 hour.

Add carrots, stir and simmer 5 minutes. Stir in kale, 4 cups water and simmer, uncovered, stirring occasionally, until kale is tender, about 15 minutes.

Makes 18 cups.

Per Cup:
Calories 124
Sodium 342 mg
Fiber 5 gm
Cholesterol-Saturated Fat Index trace

Total Fat 2 gm
Saturated Fat trace gm
Cholesterol 0 mg



