

Health News: Heart Disease

Too much sodium and too little potassium in one's diet may increase one's risk of cardiovascular disease, a new study suggests.

The Study:

The findings, based on a long-term analysis by the U.S. National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute of almost 3,000 people with pre-hypertension, also suggests that increasing potassium consumption along with the common wisdom of lowering one's salt intake may reverse the risk.

Researchers found that for people with high normal blood pressure levels (120 to 139/80 to 89 mmHg), every unit increase in the person's sodium to potassium ratio raised his or her chance of cardiovascular disease by 24 percent.

The findings were published in the Jan. 12, 2009 issue of the *Archives of Internal Medicine*.

A third of American adults have high blood pressure, defined as 140/90 mmHg or higher, while another 37 percent have pre-hypertension.

Potassium and Your Heart

One of potassium's main jobs is to help transmit nerve impulses that keep your heart beating. If you have high blood pressure, heart failure, or heart rhythm problems, getting enough potassium is especially important. Although you can't treat or prevent heart disease with potassium alone, numerous studies show that getting enough of this mineral has heart-healthy benefits.



How Much Potassium Do I Need?

The Adequate Intake (AI) level for potassium is 4,700 mg per day for people over the age of 14. **(People on some diuretics or heart disease medications should get less. Check with your doctor).** Potassium deficiencies are rare in the U.S. since it's found in a wide variety of foods, but intakes for people who don't eat a lot of fruits and vegetables could be less than optimal.

Sources of Potassium:

Fruits and vegetables are the main sources of potassium, and eating a diet rich in these is the best way to get enough.

The top food sources include:

Apricots	Prunes		
Avocados	Raisins		
Bananas	Strawberries		
Beans and peas	Spinach and other dark leafy greens		
Dates	Tomatoes		
Oranges	Potatoes		



February 2009

This month:

"American Heart Month"



Treat your heart well:

"What does it mean to get "regular physical activity?"



To reduce the risk of heart disease, adults need only do about 30 minutes of moderate activity on most, and preferably all, days of the week. This level of activity can also lower your chances of having a stroke, colon cancer, high blood pressure, diabetes, and other medical problems.

Moving Toward Low-Fat Cooking



In honor of American Heart Month, we will focus on low-fat cooking.

Many of us eat diets that are too high in fat. High fat diets increase our risk of getting chronic diseases such as coronary heart disease, certain cancers, diabetes mellitus, and stroke.

Moving Away from Fat...

- ⇒ Choose leaner cuts of meat.
- ⇒ Select lower-fat options of foods (ex. roasted chicken instead of fried chicken).
- ⇒ Use low-fat preparation methods. Remove skin and trim fat before cooking.
- ⇒ Include more fruits and vegetables in your diet.

Low Fat Cooking...

1. Stir fry, broil, roast or steam foods instead of frying.
2. Use water or broth to steam vegetables.
3. Season foods WITHOUT using butter or margarine.
 - Use low-fat sauces or dressings.
 - Use cooking sprays for pans.
 - Use plant oils, such as sunflower, corn, and olive.
 - Season with herbs and spices.
4. Choose low-fat or non-fat ingredients when cooking (ex. skim milk, low-fat yogurt, low-fat mayonaise).
5. Chill broth or soups and remove visible hardened fat.
6. After cooking ground beef, drain excess fat, and you may also rinse the meat to remove even more fat.
7. Remove all visible fat from meats before cooking.
8. Substitute plain low-fat yogurt, cottage cheese or buttermilk in recipes that call for sour cream or mayonaise.



Moves That Fit You (Goal Setting)...

- ◇ Set small goals that will add up to big changes in lowering fat in your diet.
- ◇ Choose one way you will reduce fat in your diet. Make that change to your diet for several weeks before you choose another way to reduce the fat.

Upcoming Events

March:

National Nutrition Month®

&

Registered Dietitian Day

(March 11th)



Join us at our next

Healthy Living for a Lifetime

session:

"Hot Topics in Nutrition"

(find out more about nutrition in the news and how it may be affecting you!)

March 26th, 2009 12:15-12:45

Administration Bldg., Room B190

(Healthy Living sessions are FREE and open to County employees and the community)



Nutrition on a Budget



Planning Meals Saves Time and Money!

- Check your inventory at home.
- Stock your cupboard at the beginning of the month.
- Look at newspapers for store specials.
- Look for recipes with few steps and ingredients.
- Plan simple meals for the week.
- Do some preparation steps ahead, such as placing frozen meat in the refrigerator to thaw the day before you cook, browning ground meat and chopping vegetables. Prepare large amounts, and freeze in small amounts for future meals.
- When you have time to cook, prepare an extra meal and freeze.

Do you have a nutrition question for one of your Registered Dietitians?

Feel free to submit your questions to:

Kim Hottenstein, RD, CD

608-785-9793

hottenstein.kim@co.la-crosse.wi.us



La Crosse County Health Department

Nutrition Division

300 4th Street North

This publication was created by:

Dawn McFadden, RD, CLC

Sources:

Healthy Moves-A Guide Developed To Encourage Healthy Lifestyles, Nutrition Education Programs-University of Illinois Extension

U.S. National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute, news release, Jan. 12, 2009

<http://www.americanheartassociation.com>

WNEP Stretching Your Food Dollars-Planning Meals and Shopping

Recipe Corner



Apricot-Almond Granola

Whether fresh or dried, golden [apricots are an excellent source of potassium](#). Adding them to a crunchy, heart-healthy granola increases its fruity sweetness and pumps up the potassium power.

2 3/4 cups regular oats
1/2 cup slivered almonds
1/2 cup dried cherries
1/2 cup coarsely chopped dried apricots
1/3 cup coarsely chopped walnuts
1/3 cup golden raisins
1/2 cup honey
1/3 cup butter, melted

Preheat oven to 350°.

Combine oats, almonds, and next 4 ingredients (through raisins) in a medium bowl. Combine honey and butter. Drizzle honey mixture over oat mixture; toss to coat. Spread mixture in a single layer onto a jelly-roll pan. Bake at 350° for 15 minutes; stir. Bake an additional 10 minutes or until lightly browned. Cool completely on pan. Break into pieces.

Yield: 6 cups (serving size: 1/3 cup)

CALORIES 164 (33% from fat); FAT 6g (sat 2g, mono 2g, poly 1.6g); IRON 1mg; CHOLESTEROL 7mg; CALCIUM 25mg; CARBOHYDRATE 25.4g; SODIUM 20mg; PROTEIN 3.3g; FIBER 2.6g