

# NATURE'S FOOD PATCH Market & Café® CLEARWATER • *Downtown* DUNEDIN

## Natural Insights for Well Being®

October 2021

### Live Longer

Nutritional supplements beneficial in acute illness

#### B-vitamins reduce chances of stroke

B-complex vitamins help break down the inflammatory factor, homocysteine, by metabolizing into essential, beneficial substances in the body. Doctors reviewed eight major homocysteine studies covering 8,513 participants who did or did not take B-complex vitamin supplements.

Overall, compared to placebo, the vitamin B group was 11 percent less likely to die from stroke, heart, or circulatory events. Vitamins B6, B9, and B12 were particularly effective in lowering homocysteine levels.

Also compared to placebo, homocysteine levels in those who took B vitamins were lower on average by 3.84 micromoles per liter of blood. Doctors consider 15 micromoles of homocysteine a moderate level of inflammation.

Discussing the findings, doctors said, "This meta-analysis presented substantial evidence of the benefit of B vitamins, especially among stroke patients, in lowering homocysteine and the risk of stroke and vascular deaths, with no documented side effect."

#### Curcumin complementary treatment in Covid

Curcumin has anti-inflammatory, antioxidant, antiviral, and anti-clotting effects, making it a promising candidate



for treating Covid-19. In this study, 70 Covid-19 patients continued taking conventional Covid treatments while adding a probiotic placebo or 525 mg of curcumin plus 2.5 mg of piperine, twice per day during their hospital stay.

Compared to placebo, those in the curcumin group recovered sooner from fever, cough, sore throat, and breathlessness, and deteriorated less while in the hospital. The curcumin group was also better able to maintain oxygen saturation levels above 94 percent on ambient room air.

Fewer in the curcumin group required intubation or mechanical ventilation to maintain oxygen saturation, and when these were required, needed them for shorter periods of time. Those in the curcumin group also required fewer injections of remdesivir, and experienced fewer blood clotting episodes compared to placebo.

"Curcumin with piperine can significantly improve the effects of the Covid-19 treatment protocol," doctors concluded.

REFERENCE: CUREUS; 2021, 10.7759, 14958, PUBLISHED ONLINE

OCTOBER'S

### Healthy Insight Ginger for Digestion

Feeling full after a few bites of food, along with a bloated abdomen, are the major symptoms of non-ulcer indigestion, called functional dyspepsia (FD). Doctors don't know what causes it.

In this study, 50 people with FD took a placebo or 200 mg of ginger extract twice per day. After four weeks, 41 percent in the ginger group reported having felt better throughout the entire trial. Overall, doctors determined that 79 percent of those taking ginger had responded favorably compared to 21 percent for placebo.

Discussing the findings, doctors said that ginger extract is a safe and effective remedy for non-ulcer indigestion.

REFERENCE: JOURNAL OF DIETARY SUPPLEMENTS; 2020, 1856996, PUBLISHED ONLINE

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# Age Well

## Nutrients preserve vision, improve hospital recovery

### Lutein slows advanced AMD

Lutein is one of the main carotenoids in the macula of the eye that is responsible for filtering damaging blue light, and for protecting against age-related macular degeneration (AMD); a blind spot in the center of the field of vision.

In this study, doctors evaluated 963 men and women, aged at least 73, every two years over an eight-year period, during which 54 developed advanced AMD. Those with higher circulating lutein levels were 37 percent less likely to have developed advanced AMD.

Also, those with higher lutein levels compared to total cholesterol and triglyceride levels were 41 percent less likely to develop advanced AMD.

Doctors said measuring circulating lutein levels is a good way to identify

those who are deficient, and who may have higher chances of developing AMD.

### Vitamin C helps maintain strength in hospital

Until now, doctors have focused on the lack of protein in the diet as a cause of frailty in old age. This is the first study to look at how micronutrients such as vitamin C can affect frailty.

In this study, doctors measured frailty in 160 hospitalized men and women, average age 84 years. Frailty includes measures of cognition, health status, independent living, medicines, nutrition, mood, and bodily and physical function.

Vitamin C levels were low or deficient in 61.9 percent of participants, and significantly lower in those with

moderate to severe frailty scores. Doctors said 40 percent of total vitamin C in the body is present in skeletal muscle, directly affecting muscle function.

REFERENCE: NUTRIENTS; 2021, VOL. 13, No. 6, 10.3390/NU13062047



# Exercise

## Cod liver oil, betaine sped recovery and protected immunity after exercise

### Cod liver oil's powerful anti-inflammatory effect

Few studies have examined the anti-inflammatory effects of cod liver oil, which contains the omega-3s EPA, DHA, vitamins A and D, and other antioxidants.



In this study, doctors measured fish oil in the diets of 1,002 healthy recreational athletes, and their inflammatory factor—C-reactive protein—levels before and after a 57-mile bicycle race. Of the 856 who reported taking omega-3 fish oil supplements, 20.2 percent took it in the form of cod liver oil.

Those who took fish oil supplements had C-reactive protein levels 16 percent lower than those who did not take fish oil supplements. When doctors isolated the cod liver oil users, they found 34 percent lower C-reactive protein levels compared to the non-fish-oil group.

### Betaine protects immunity after intense exercise

Intense exercise reduces immunity.

In this study, 29 professional youth soccer league players, age 15 to 16, took a placebo or 2 grams of betaine per day before, during and after the season.

Comparing inflammatory factors before and after the season, interleukin-1 and -6 (Il-1, Il-6) decreased 24 to 40 percent for those taking betaine while increasing 6.8 percent for placebo. The betaine group also did not see an increase in white blood cell counts (WBC)—an inflammatory response—while WBC increased for placebo.

Discussing the findings, doctors said betaine influences a major inflammatory pathway, suppressing expression of inflammatory Il-1, Il-6, and tumor necrosis factors.

REFERENCE: JOURNAL OF THE INTERNATIONAL SOCIETY OF SPORTS NUTRITION; 2021, ARTICLE No. 51, PUBLISHED ONLINE

# Digestion

## Synbiotics and probiotics improve symptoms in GI disorders

### Synbiotics improve microbiome, reduce inflammation in colitis

When the large intestine has open sores, the condition is called ulcerative colitis, one of several inflammatory bowel disorders. While doctors don't know what causes colitis, they believe it is likely due to an overactive immune response; creating an environment of chronic, systemic inflammation.

Synbiotics combine prebiotics like inulin, and probiotics like lactobacillus



and bifidobacterium. The two work synergistically to promote and maintain a balanced microbiome.

In this review of several studies, synbiotics significantly reduced the inflammatory factors C-reactive protein, tumor necrosis, and interleukin-1 and -10. The synbiotics also increased the level of probiotic microorganisms in the gut, and increased the level of anti-inflammatory factors in the body. An index of bowel habits also improved.

Discussing the results, doctors said synbiotics improved gastrointestinal conditions at the tissue and cellular levels.

### Probiotics improved microbiome in CRC

To get an overview of the effect of probiotics on symptoms in colorectal cancer (CRC), doctors reviewed 23

random controlled clinical trials. In the studies, the most common probiotics participants took were bifidobacterium and lactobacillus.

Overall, doctors found consistent evidence probiotics improved quality of life, enhanced gut microbiota diversity, reduced post-operative infection and its complications, and inhibited pro-inflammatory cytokine factors.

In addition to these benefits, probiotics also reduced side effects of chemotherapy, improved outcomes in surgery, shortened the length of stay in hospitals, and decreased the chances of dying from CRC.

In discussing the findings, doctors said they observed the beneficial effects of probiotics regardless of the stage of cancer.

**REFERENCE:** NUTRITION REVIEWS; 2021, NUAB017, PUBLISHED ONLINE

# Mood

## Saffron and tryptophan improve mood

### Saffron reduced depression in perimenopause

As women approach menopause—perimenopause—physical symptoms such as hot flashes, night sweats, and sleep disturbances can occur. Cognitive performance and mood factors such as depression and anxiety are also common. In this study, 82 perimenopausal women, aged 40 to 60, took a placebo or 14 mg of saffron extract twice per day. Doctors measured symptoms at the start and end of the 12-week trial.

Those who took saffron saw greater improvements in mood and psychological symptoms compared to the placebo group and, compared to the start of the study, saffron takers saw a

33 percent decrease in anxiety, and a 32 percent decrease in depression scores. There were no changes in either group for any of the physical symptoms.

### Tryptophan reduced anxiety, improved mood, sleep quality

In this review of 11 random controlled clinical trials on anxiety and mood, participants took a placebo or doses ranging from 140 to 3,000 mg of tryptophan per day.

Overall, those taking tryptophan reported decreases in anxiety and increases in positive mood. In four of the studies, there were significant decreases in negative feelings and increases in happy feelings for those taking tryptophan compared to placebo.

In a separate study, tryptophan reduced the amount of time awake after falling asleep, with those taking more than 1 gram falling back asleep after 29 minutes compared to 57 minutes for those taking doses less than 1 gram of tryptophan.

**REFERENCE:** JOURNAL OF MENOPAUSAL MEDICINE; 2021, VOL. 27, E8, PUBLISHED ONLINE



# Wellness Day!



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## Calm Young Adults

### Magnesium reduced hostility in young adults

Earlier clinical trials found a link between magnesium and improved mood, but this is the first to explore magnesium and hostility. In this study, doctors estimated magnesium in the diets of 4,716 young adults, aged 18 to 30, from their answers to food questionnaires and nutritional supplement reports.

They found a direct link: as the level of magnesium in the diet increased, measures of hostility decreased. Those who also got more omega-3s in the diet along with better magnesium levels were even less likely to exhibit hostile behaviors.

Doctors think that there are several biologically plausible ways magnesium may influence hostility, including

playing a role in the signaling between the hypothalamus in the brain, the pituitary, and adrenal glands, which secrete hormones linked to stress. Magnesium may also help metabolize serotonin, a major mood hormone.

Because hostility increases chances for heart and circulatory problems, doctors drew participants for this study from a larger clinical trial examining heart and circulatory factors in young adults.

REFERENCE: NUTRITION RESEARCH; 2021, VOL. 89, 35-44



## Your Good News!®

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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