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Diet rich in healthy fats lowers risk of Diabetes

Growing number of diabetics is a public health concern that we need to face in our modern times. The unhealthy choices that we make, place us at risk of developing type 2 diabetes (DM). Lifestyles that include low exercise regime, adoption of poor diet, and smoking are a few of these choices that increases the risk for DM. conversely, choosing a healthy lifestyle can also bring about lowered risk of developing this disease as well as other related diseases such as hypertension and cardiovascular diseases.

A recent research[1], which incorporated more than 100 randomized clinical trials with more than 4000 adult participants, revealed that individuals who have energy intake of carbohydrates, saturated fatty acids and, even monounsaturated fatty acids (MUFA), and replaced it with high polyunsaturated fatty acids (PUFA) have lower risks of developing diabetes. The authors investigated that this type of healthy fat was shown to lower fasting glucose and HbA1c (glycated hemoglobin), a valuable tool for determining glycemic control. Additionally, they also found that there is improvement in insulin secretion and insulin resistance. Thus, investigators concluded that the general population need to increase their intake of foods rich in PUFA. Public health policy-makers should also emphasize the value of PUFA when recommending clinical dietary guidelines.

Foods rich in PUFA include plant-based oils, fatty fish and some nuts and seeds. Plant-based oils can be soybean oil, corn oil, olive oil and sunflower oil. Fishes that are high in PUFA are salmon, mackerel, herring and trout.

Symptoms of IBS may be relieved with modified rye bread

Many people who have Irritable Bowel Syndrome (IBS) consistently complain of a myriad of chronic abdominal issues like pain, flatulence, cramps, diarrhea, constipation and bloating. Various food groups have been noted to trigger these symptoms; hence, the role of diet in the management of those with this condition. Furthermore, Fermentable Oligo-, Di-, Monosaccharides and Polyols (FODMAPs) diet comprising of simple carbohydrates are linked to some functional gastrointestinal…

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conditions including IBS.

In a recent clinical trial conducted in Finland[2], researchers investigated whether low-FODMAP rye bread is better tolerated by participants with IBS compared to regular rye bread. They recruited more than 80 volunteers who have been diagnosed with IBS, and were randomly assigned to either the modified rye bread, or the regular rye bread for a two 4-week treatment with four weeks 'washout' period between the two treatment periods.

The findings showed that the modified rye bread provided milder occurrence of symptoms compared to those who had regular rye bread for 4 weeks. Symptoms that were noted to have become milder were the occurrence of stomach aches, abdominal cramps and flatulence.

Although the results were promising, as this is the very first study that looked into the effect of bread in patients with IBS, the study was carried out in a short period of time with few participants. Nevertheless, it revealed that low-FODMAP rye bread is tolerated by most patients with IBS.

It is important to note that individuals who have been diagnosed to have IBS to consult with their medical practitioner and dietitian prior to commencing any form of diet to alleviate their symptoms.

Zinc shortens duration of common colds, study reveals

Common cold is prevalent both in children and adults, especially during the colder seasons. It is caused by any of the 200 types of viruses, which includes rhinoviruses and adenoviruses.

Although self-limiting, common cold can often be complicated with bacterial infection, which necessitates antibiotic treatment.

Besides bed rest and conservative treatment of symptoms, various medical management options have been advised, and may contribute to a lesser duration of common cold. Amongst these options include intake of vitamin C and zinc.

In a current study[3], investigators analyzed three randomized controlled trials, where zinc acetate lozenges were given to volunteers with common cold. It aimed to understand, if allergy status, smoking, age, sex or ethnicity can modify the effects of zinc acetate lozenges.

In all three trials evaluated, the researchers found out that zinc acetate lozenges results in a 3-day reduction of the duration of common cold, regardless of allergy and smoking status as well as age, gender or ethnicity. In other words, patients with common colds from various population groups can benefit from having zinc acetate lozenges.

Further, the researchers also pointed out that their analysis need to be further investigated as to ascertain the suitable dosing and frequency of zinc acetate lozenges to achieve results with minimal adverse effects.

Common cold prevention is achieved by ensuring that the immune system is at its best by having regular exercise, a balanced, healthy diet, and adequate sleep.

Cycling helps prevent development of Diabetes

Having a sedentary lifestyle is one of the risk factors associated with various chronic, debilitating diseases, including the rise of obesity. It is for this reason that medical authorities and practitioners have been advocating a more active lifestyle to mitigate these risks.

One of the ways to achieve a better active lifestyle is to cycle. Cycling can be done as a recreation, or as a mode of traveling either to work, school, or any other place.

In a recent cohort study conducted in Denmark[4], which has more than 50,000 participants, the association between cycling and type 2 diabetes has been investigated. Further, this large, population research provided insights on the value of cycling in preventing type 2 diabetes during an initial examination and a second examination that is five years apart.

Volunteers in this Danish study were between 50 and 65 years of age without DM, heart attack, stroke and cancer.

The outcome of the research revealed that cycling, in any form – recreational or commuter cycling, lowers the risk of developing diabetes compared to no cycling. Diabetes risk is also lowered when cycling is regularly done throughout the year as opposed to seasonal cycling. Moreover, if habitual cycling is continued, the study showed that it was better in reducing DM risk, in comparison to, cessation and no cycling. But, it is never too late to start cycling, as the research also showed that initiating cycling lowered diabetes risk compared to those who ceased cycling.

With these results, the authors concluded that middle and old age adults should be encouraged to cycle to help prevent the development of type 2 diabetes.

Overall, this study provided us an insight that confirms that regular exercise such as cycling is an important preventive measure in diabetes. It is suffice, to say, that diabetes is a preventable disease, which entails a healthy lifestyle of regular exercise and a balanced diet.

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