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Nutrition in the News
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Orthorexia: An Obsession with Healthy Eating

Following a well-balanced diet is an important part of living a healthy life, but when eating “pure” becomes an obsession for someone, they may be slipping into a disordered eating pattern called orthorexia. According to Karin Kratina, PhD, RD, LD/N, eating healthy is not considered orthorexia unless, “1) it is taking up an inordinate amount of time and attention in your life; 2) deviating from that diet is met with guilt and self-loathing; and/or 3) it is used to avoid life issues and leaves you separate and alone.” Like anorexia, orthorexia is based upon food restriction, but orthorexia is restrictive of food quality rather than quantity. Orthorexics often restrict food groups to the point of malnourishment in the quest to be “pure.”

Orthorexia is an isolating disorder, meaning people suffering from this disordered eating often exclude themselves from family meals or social gatherings around food because they experience a lot of anxiety about eating food they have not prepared for themselves. Also, orthorexics can feel self-righteous about their eating being better than others, which contributes to them isolating themselves. Unfortunately, habits like these cause relationships and social lives of orthorexics to suffer, but they are signs that are a little easier for friends and family to pick up on to get the individual help before severe mental and physical harm sets in.

Recovery from orthorexia is possible with professional help. Society’s push for thinness and dieting can make it difficult to notice when seemingly healthy habits go awry. However, if you do suspect someone you know is suffering from orthorexia, start out by asking if they’d be open to simply seeing someone about whether or not their eating patterns are normal. It is vital to recovery that individuals suffering from orthorexia receive accurate information on foods and proper nutrition. A health professional, like a dietitian, can help them understand what a well-balanced diet actually looks like in order to establish a healthy relationship with food.

For more information about eating disorders, visit the National Association of Anorexia Nervosa and Associated Disorders.

https://www.nationaleatingdisorders.org/orthorexia-nervosa (R.K)

A Sweet Treat

With many people celebrating Valentine’s Day this month, there will be plenty of large and vibrant chocolate displays in grocery stores. One common ingredient in those chocolate goodies are cocoa. Cocoa seeds are quickly being labeled as a “Super Fruit” due to their high levels of antioxidants. Dark chocolate, which goes through little processing, has fairly high amounts of antioxidants compared to more heavily processed items like hot chocolate. Other foods that contain high antioxidant power include:

- Berries: blueberries, raspberries, strawberries, and cranberries
- Vegetables: artichokes, kale and bell peppers, and sweet potatoes
- Nuts: walnuts, pistachios, pecans, hazelnuts, and almonds
- Legumes: kidney beans, edamame, and lentils
- Beverages: coffee, tea, pomegranate juice, and red wine

What does this mean for chocolate lovers? Grab a dark chocolate bar or some dark chocolate covered strawberries—maybe even enjoy a glass of red wine this Valentine’s Day to get an antioxidant boost!

https://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2011/02/110207073748.htm (H.M)
Brain Food

Feeling forgetful lately? This could be due to numerous factors such as lack of sleep, lack of physical activity, stress, and genetics. Nutrition also happens to play a key role in memory and overall brain health. Just like your heart, it is important to get proper blood flow to your brain in order to keep it functioning properly. There have been numerous research studies focusing on the Mediterranean diet’s benefits to not only cognitive health, but health overall.

A main emphasis of the Mediterranean diet is to eat more vegetables, specifically cruciferous vegetables. Examples of cruciferous vegetables are broccoli, cauliflower, cabbage, and kale. These types of veggies contain antioxidants, which help protect our brains from damaging compounds called free radicals, which are known to cause inflammation. Inflammation can lead to blood clots, which can slow blood flow throughout the body.

Berries also contain nutrients called flavonoids that help protect the brain from inflammation. Darker colored berries, like blackberries and cherries, contain a flavonoid called anthocyanin, which gives these fruits their anti-inflammatory effect. Anthocyanin, along with other flavonoids, have been shown to improve memory, as well.

Omega-3 fatty acids are a major contributor for improving cognitive function. Like antioxidants and flavonoids, omega-3 fatty acids help to protect the brain from inflammatory damage. The best source of omega-3’s come from fatty fish like salmon, bluefin tuna, sardines and herring. It is recommended to eat 2 to 3 servings of fish each week.

Not a fish person? No problem! There are fish oil and seaweed supplements that can help boost your omega-3 levels. Nuts, like walnuts, are another good source of omega-3’s, but be weary about nuts being your main source of this fatty acid, however. Nuts also contain omega-6 fatty acids, which actually promote inflammation. So, like anything else in life, it’s important to find that right balance!

http://www.eatright.org/resource/health/wellness/healthy-aging/memory-boosting-foods (A.M)
Swapping Animal for Plant Proteins

A new study suggests that swapping one to two servings of animal proteins for plant proteins a day could lower three key cholesterol markers, which may help in cardiovascular disease prevention. The three cholesterol markers that were studied were low-density lipoprotein (LDL), which contributes to fatty buildups in arteries, non-high density lipoprotein, which is the total cholesterol minus high-density lipoprotein, and apolipoprotein B, which is the protein within low-density lipoprotein that contributes to clogged arteries. Some good sources of plant protein include soy, nuts, beans, and lentils. Cholesterol lowering effects may be even greater if these plant proteins are combined with other cholesterol-lowering foods such as oats, barley, and plant sterols.

In addition to the heart health benefits that swapping animal proteins for plant protein provides, this diet alteration may help you feel fuller longer and aid in weight loss. These vegetables are also high in fiber, which contribute to the increased and the longer lasting feelings of fullness. A study done by University of Copenhagen was able to show that a group of men who consumed a bean and pea based meal consumed 12% fewer calories at their next meal compared to the men who consumed a meat based meal.

Besides Valentine’s Day, February is also the month for celebrating National Heart Awareness. Here are some tips you can follow to integrate a heart healthy diet to help prevent cardiovascular disease.

**Control your portion sizes:** Use a small plate or bowl when eating so you are less likely to consume excess calories. Also, try to eat larger portions of low-calorie, nutrient dense food like fruits and vegetables. Eating smaller portions of high-calorie and high-sodium foods, like processed foods, is important, as well.

**Eat more fruits and vegetables:** Fruits and vegetables contain vitamins and minerals and other nutrients that may prevent cardiovascular disease. When buying fruits and vegetables, stay away from vegetables that are fried or in creamy sauces and fruit packed in heavy syrup or with added sugars.

**Select whole grains:** Whole grains can help regulate blood pressure and improve heart health because they are packed with fiber and other nutrients. Substitute some of your refined grains with whole grains and try to stay away from white bread, frozen waffles, quick breads, and cakes.

**Limit saturated and trans fats:** High blood cholesterol levels can lead to plaque buildup in your arteries. Limiting how much saturated fat and trans fat are in your diet can help lower cholesterol levels and decreases your risk for a heart attack and stroke.

**Choose low-fat protein sources:** Lean meat, poultry, fish, low-fat dairy products, and eggs are great sources of protein. When choosing your protein, choose lower fat options such as skim milk rather than whole milk and skinless chicken breasts rather than fried chicken patties.

**Reduce sodium content:** High sodium levels can lead to high blood pressure, which is a risk for cardiovascular disease. Much of the salt you consume comes from canned and processed foods, such as frozen dinners and pre-made soups.

It’s important to plan meals ahead of time but still allow yourself the occasional treat. Eating the occasional potato chips or candy bar will not significantly impact your heart healthy diet. Don’t let the occasional treat or dinner out derail you completely and drive you to give up on your heart healthy lifestyle!

https://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/heart-disease/in-depth/heart-healthy-diet/art-20047702?pg=1 (H.M)

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**Pistachio Banana Ice Cream**

**Ingredients:**
1 1/4c raw unshelled , unsalted pistachios
1 large or 2 small frozen bananas
1 tbsp unsweetened almond milk

**Directions:**
1. Puree banana in blender
2. Add in pistachios and almond milk
3. Pour into bowl and freeze for 1-2 hours
4. Enjoy! :)

**Nutrition Facts:**
Servings (without cone): 1
Serving Size: 1
Calories: 278.6
Total Fat: 14.3g
Saturated Fat: 1.8g
Polyunsaturated Fat: 4.2 g
Monounsaturated Fat: 7.3 g
Sodium: 13.1 mg
Potassium: 749.5mg
Total carbohydrates: 35.7g
Dietary Fiber: 6.3g
Protein: 7.7 g

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