

Broccoli: Anti-cancer

Is broccoli anti-cancer?

Broccoli and broccoli sprouts can help fight stomach ulcers and stomach cancer, reported researchers from the Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine in a recent issue of Proceedings of the National Academy of Science. These vegetables contain a chemical (sulforaphane, an anti-cancer) that kills the bacteria responsible for stomach ulcers and linked to gastric cancer formation. This substance kills helicobacter pylori, the culprit bug that causes stomach ulcer which is resistant to many commonly used antibiotics. In Asia, Africa, Central and South America about 85% of the population is infected with helicobacter, due to poverty and poor sanitary condition. Since antibiotic therapy is very expensive, eating broccoli, other vegetables and fruits is a safe and effective way of warding off some infections and ailments. Fruits and vegetables, in general, have so much beneficial natural chemicals in them that boost our immune system, inhibit the growth of pathogens, and help us fight diseases. Broccoli also helps lower the risk of Alzheimer's. Indeed, mother was right all along!

How about hot paprika?

Yes, hot paprika is an anti-cancer of the colon. And so with curry powder, thyme and Worcestershire sauce, all of which contain salicylic acid (as in aspirin, which is acetylsalicylic acid), an anti-inflammatory agent, which has been found to be anti-colon cancer. Red meat and other fatty foods, on the other hand, increase the risk for colon cancer and other cancers in the body.

Does aspirin reduce prostate cancer risk?

Yes, aspirin does. And so does another pain killer, ibuprofen, and other NSAIDs (nonsteroidal anti inflammatory drugs). A daily dose of any of these reduces the risk for development of cancer of the prostate, besides helping lessen the chances of a heart attack and stroke. This was borne out by a 5-year study at the Mayo Clinic involving 1400 men older than 50, where only 4% developed prostatic cancer among those who regularly took one of these painkillers, and 9% among those who did not. The greatest protective effect was noted among those who are between 70 and 79 years old, where there was 83% reduction in cancer risk. Prostate cancer is the second leading cause of death in the USA. Earlier studies have shown that prolonged intake of aspirin or NSAIDs may reduce other types of cancers (colon, rectum, breast, and esophagus). A word of caution: self-medication is dangerous, and could even be fatal because aspirin and NSAIDs can cause

gastrointestinal ulcers and massive bleeding. As always, check with your physician to find out if this regimen is right for you.

Do tomatoes lower the risk of prostatic cancer?

Additional good news for men: processed tomatoes (ketchup, sauces, pastes, etc.) lower the risk of cancer of the prostate. Researchers believe the ingredient lycopene, a powerful antioxidant found in tomatoes, is the protective agent. Processed tomatoes contain lycopene of higher potency compared to fresh raw tomatoes. The reduction in cancer risk was highest among those who regularly ingested processed tomatoes. The study, which was reported in the Journal of the National Cancer Institute on March 6, 2002, involving 47,000 men, confirmed the previous findings of a research at Harvard School of Public Health.

Do women live longer?

It is a known fact that women live longer than men, but statistics in the year 2000 show that women's life expectancy broke a new record: 79.5 years! However, according to *Women's Health USA 2002*, women today still suffer more than men from conditions like diabetes, osteoporosis, lupus, and asthma. While the most common causes of death in 1999 (heart disease, stroke and cancer) were equal among both genders, more women died of stroke, diabetes and influenza. Women also have higher disability rate than men. Almost twice as many women suffered disability from arthritis, the second leading cause of disability among females next to back pains.

How much viagra has been prescribed?

More than 10 million men have been prescribed Sildenafil Citrate (Viagra) for the treatment of erectile dysfunction (ED), according to Pfizer, the company that manufactures this "miracle drug." Fifty percent of men, between the ages of 40 and 70, have ED of varying degrees, and, if medically cleared of any contraindication, could be helped by viagra. The usual dose is 50 mg taken an hour before sexual activity. The erection could last for 2 or more hours, as long as sexual stimulation is maintained. Any distraction normally relieves the erection. If taken at night, resumption of erection is usually noted in the morning. New and improved drugs, with faster onset of effect and with lesser side effects, are in the pipeline, and so with ones for women.

Are women staying away from high heels?

Women of today, especially the younger ones, are moving away from high-heeled shoes. More than 67% of working females are wearing flat shoes, low-heeled

pumps and other comfortable shoes, thus significantly reducing the risk of foot injuries, according to Carol C. Frey, M.D., interim clinical professor in orthopedic surgery at UCLA. High heels are associated with the greatest percentage of injuries like bunions, calluses, ingrown toenails and neuromas. Survey shows 46% are now wearing flat shoes, 25% athletic style shoes, 21% high heels and 7% other types of shoes. Among those aged 20-30, 88% use flat shoes and 12%, high heels; 31-40, 74% flat and 26% high heels; and among those 41-50 years old, 76% flat and 24% high heels. The staggering cost to the US economy of foot injuries and resulting loss of productivity is about 1.5 billion dollars a year.

Coated heart stents: A breakthrough?

A European, Brazilian and U.S. studies, done independently, are causing explosive celebration in the field of interventional cardiology. Since coronary balloon angioplasty was introduced about 25 years ago to open up clogged coronary arteries of the heart to ward off heart attack, the problem of re-stenosis (re-blockage) of the ballooned arteries (about 35%-50% within 6 months) continued to plague angioplasty. Tiny spirally coiled mesh called stents have been used to “prop open” ballooned arteries were used to maintain patency, but even with these stents, the incidence of re-stenosis was still quite significant, requiring repeat angioplasties or surgery. The findings, as reported June 6, 2002 in *The New England Journal of Medicine*, revealed that the “new” angioplasty technique utilizes stents that are coated with the drug *sirolimus* (also known as rapamycin), which has been shown in those studies mentioned earlier to prevent re-stenosis in almost all patients after six months. How long these ballooned arteries will remain open with this *sirolimus* coated stents will be evident after its extensive clinical use all over the world.

Is TV viewing linked to obesity in children?

Yes, it is well-documented scientifically that obesity in schoolchildren is more prevalent among those who spend more time watching the television or videos. The study also found that even among those who are one to four years old, the rate of obesity is directly proportional to the TV/video viewing duration. And those children who have a television set in their bedroom are even more prone to obesity. The reason could be the sedentary nature of TV viewing, which could also be associated with munching on a lot of junk foods while watching. Children of better-educated parents were noted to watch less TV/video. Since moderation is the key, limiting the daily viewing hours to educational and other children shows to a couple of hours a day might be prudent. Our home rule for our five children (who are now physicians): no TV or video when there is school the following day. In short, TV/video watching only on Friday evenings and on Saturdays. Discipline is important, and we, parents, must take full control in guiding our children to ensure a better health and a greater future for them.

