

YourHealthNews

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Various spices and herbs have been noted to have health benefits.

They are considered to have anti-inflammatory properties and effective against free radicals.

A new study¹ conducted in the US, found that curcumin, a substance that is commonly found in turmeric (a common spice that gives the yellow color in curries), have cognitive benefits.

The authors examined forty adult volunteers, age between 50 and 90 years, who do not have any form of dementia. They were divided into two groups – one group was instructed to take curcumin supplements and the other group

Research finds turmeric compound, curcumin, to have memory benefits

was to take placebo. All were advised to take them for 18 months. Throughout the research, participants were also provided with surveys to determine the mood and



depression levels as well as memory and cognition tests every six months. Additionally, brain scans were also done to evaluate anatomical signs of dementia.

depression when compared to those who took the placebo. Brain scans also showed convincing results in the group that took the curcumin supplement.

The investigators concluded that curcumin improve memory and attention in non-demented adults. Although the exact mechanism as to how curcumin provides these cognitive benefits is uncertain, they attributed several potential mechanisms, such as its anti-inflammatory and anti-oxidant properties.

With this promising research, the potential to prevent dementia is not far-fetch in becoming a reality. The solution may well be in the kitchen in the form of our herbs.

Heart failure may be prevented by exercise, study confirms

Regular exercise is a valuable component of a healthy lifestyle. The range of health benefits of an active lifestyle is wide – from physical to psycho-neurologic benefits; hence, health experts advocate exercise programs.

Recent research² on exercise programs performed by middle-aged adults who have sedentary lifestyles showed that regular exercise can prevent heart failure, a condition wherein the heart muscle is weakened and results in insufficient pumping of blood to maintain the needs of the body.

This study carried out in the US was completed by 52 volunteers, who were randomly assigned into two groups. One group were enrolled to do the exercise program; while, the second group (control) performed the balance and flexibility training, which includes yoga. Both groups had programs done for two years.



At the end of the study, results revealed that in general the exercise group became fitter compared to the control group. The amount of energy used during exercise, calculated from the amount of oxygen consumed during the incremental intensity of the exercise, is increased by 18%. In contrast, this was not observed in the control group.

Also, cardiac stiffness was significantly reduced in those who were in the exercise group. Cardiac stiffness is one mechanism that results in heart failure.

Although regular exercise has shown to prevent heart failure, it is emphasized that prolonged (at least two years) exercise for at least 30 minutes, 4 to 5 days per weeks is the exercise program that may warrant prevention of the heart condition.

With the amounting health benefits of regular exercise, it is paramount for us to be more active in our lifestyles to prevent, or at least delay, the likelihood of having chronic diseases.

Soy lecithin increases energy in fatigued women

What is common between egg yolks, soybeans and fish? The answer – lecithin, a complex fat molecule termed as phospholipids that are essential for body energy.

Since lecithin is necessary in energy storage in our body cells, they are believed to be important in improving fatigue, a bothering non-specific symptom experienced by many.

New research³ on soy lecithin investigated its effect on middle-aged women who have menopausal symptoms that includes tiredness and mood states.

The study investigated by experts in Japan recruited more than 90 women manifesting fatigue who were age between 40 and 60 years. The participants were categorized into three groups that pertain to tablets they need to take for eight weeks: high-dose soy lecithin, low-dose soy lecithin and placebo. They were given surveys to assess their fatigue, mood and other menopausal symptoms.

Although exhaustion scores were no different in each groups, results

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showed that those who took a high-dose soy lecithin have better energy due to increases in vigor scores compared to those who took the placebo. It is also noted that diastolic blood pressure was also lowered in this group.

“Fatigue is a non-specific, very common symptom that is associated with many disorders.”

Although the results are promising, the researchers recommend further studies on the benefits of lecithin in improving symptoms of fatigue. The research, however, add to numerous evidences about the benefits of lecithin in improving perceived energy among individuals who complained of tiredness.

Fatigue, as noted earlier, is a non-specific, very common symptom that is associated with many disorders. Individuals who complain of this symptom is best to consult their medical practitioners to pinpoint the cause of their symptom. When the cause of the exhaustion is known or a correct diagnosis is made, then appropriate treatment and management is provided.

New research links long-term intake of ibuprofen to male infertility

A commonly used, over-the-counter, painkiller has been found to have a linked with male infertility in a new study⁴.

The analgesic, ibuprofen, when taken regularly may lead to a form of male infertility called compensated hypogonadism. This temporary condition is often seen in the elderly, manifesting as erectile dysfunction, decrease morning erections, and depression.

The research conducted by investigators from Denmark and France enrolled 31 healthy men under the age of 35. The men were grouped into two, to either take 600 milligram of ibuprofen twice a day or a placebo for six weeks. All men underwent blood and hormonal analysis throughout the study.

At two weeks of ibuprofen use, researchers noted the men to have a 23% increase levels of luteinizing

hormone (a hormone that regulates testosterone production) in the blood. At 11 weeks, the level is even higher at 33%.

Though luteinizing hormone was increased, the level of testosterone did not result in any rise, which lead to compensated hypogonadism due to a lower ratio of testosterone to luteinizing hormone.



With these results, the experts believed that prolonged use of the painkiller, ibuprofen, can lead to erectile dysfunction and decrease sexual drive. However, they claim that

occasional use may not result in this clinical condition.

Prior to regular intake of pain relievers, it is best to consult with your medical practitioners to ensure that any unforeseen side effects may not result from it.

Yoga beneficial in people with metabolic syndrome

New research has found that yoga could benefit people with metabolic syndrome, a condition commonly associated with diabetes and heart disease.

The study carried out by researchers from Hong Kong, China looked into the benefits of yoga in those who have metabolic syndrome as well as mechanisms behind these benefits.

Ninety-seven volunteers with metabolic syndrome and high blood pressure were recruited. Fifty-two of them



underwent yoga sessions per week for a year; while the rest were not given any intervention. Blood samples were taken before and after the start of the study to evaluate specific proteins, known as adipokines. These proteins are released by fat cells that trigger a cascade of release of inflammatory and anti-inflammatory responses by the immune system.

Analysis of the data showed that yoga resulted in significant drop in the waist circumference of those who underwent the activity compared to those who did not. This result is imperative since people with metabolic syndrome have waistlines above normal, clinically termed as central obesity.

Also noted is the rise of anti-inflammatory adipokines and the lowered inflammatory adipokines. This proves that yoga's inherent benefits are associated with modulating the process of inflammation in the body. This mechanism may provide clues why yoga has been suggested to help diabetics and heart disease patients in managing their symptoms.

This promising results convinces more individuals with metabolic syndrome to increase their active lifestyle by engaging in activities such as yoga to achieve better and healthier lives.

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