



# York Downs Pharmacy

## Natural Insights for Well Being®

March 2011

### Staying Brainy

B and D vitamins help keep the brain youthful

#### More vitamin B12, less AD

In this Alzheimer's disease (AD) study, researchers measured signs of inflammation and blood levels of vitamin B12 in 271 adults, aged 65 to 79, who did not have dementia at the start of the study. After 17 years of follow-up, doctors found two strong links: as levels of the inflammatory protein homocysteine rose, so did chances of AD, and as vitamin B12 levels increased, chances of AD decreased. Vitamin B deficiencies can cause high homocysteine levels. The scientists said that older adults are often low in vitamin B12 and suggested more study to confirm that vitamin B12 helps protect memory.

#### More B vitamins, bigger brains

The brain shrinks with age and dementia. In this study, 168 people, aged at least 70, with mild mental impairment, took 800 mcg of folic acid, 500 mcg of vitamin B12, and 20 mg of vitamin B6, per day, or a placebo. After two years, the rate of shrinking had increased 8 percent for placebo and decreased 24 percent for the B vitamin group. Those in the B vitamin group who began the study with higher levels of inflammatory homocysteine saw shrinking slow by 53 percent. Doctors suggest more study to see if B vitamins can maintain brain health.



#### More vitamin D, better brain function

In this mental health study, doctors measured blood levels of vitamin D and mental function in 752 similar, relatively healthy women, aged at least 75. Researchers separated the women into two groups; those with low vitamin D—less than 10 nanograms of vitamin D per milliliter (ng per ml) of blood—and those with 10 or more ng per ml. The women in the higher vitamin D group were half as likely to have impaired mental function as were women with lower levels of vitamin D.

REFERENCE: NEUROLOGY; 2010, VOL. 75, NO. 16, 1408-14

MARCH'S

### Healthy Insight Melatonin Helps Preserve Eyesight

Telomeres—the protective tips on the ends of each DNA strand—are a primary sign of aging; the longer the telomere, the younger the cell age. In this study, 55 people with weakening vision from age-related macular degeneration (AMD) took 3 mg of melatonin per day. After six months, 75 percent had stable eyesight and fewer AMD symptoms. In AMD, the retina deteriorates over time. In a new theory, doctors said that the antioxidants in melatonin help retinal pigment cells repair oxidative damage and stimulate the cells to produce telomerase, a protein that helps maintain healthy telomere length.

REFERENCE: MEDICAL HYPOTHESES JOURNAL; 2011, VOL. 76, NO. 1, 79-85

### This Issue

|  |   |
|--|---|
| NUTRIENTS HELP PEOPLE LOSE WEIGHT AND IMPROVE HEALTH | 2 |
| NUTRIENTS HELP IMPROVE MEN'S FITNESS AND PERFORMANCE | 2 |
| NUTRIENTS HELP KIDS BEHAVE, THINK, AND FEEL BETTER   | 3 |
| NUTRIENT FOCUS: OMEGA-3                              | 3 |
| INSTITUTE OF MEDICINE RAISES VITAMIN D GUIDELINES    | 4 |

# Weight Wise

## Nutrients help people lose weight and improve health

### L-carnitine helped diabetics lose weight

In this study, 258 obese people with uncontrolled type 2 diabetes took 120 mg of the prescription fat blocker Orlistat three times per day, with or without 2,000 mg of L-carnitine once per day, for one year. Researchers took measurements at the start and end of the study, and every three months. Compared to those who took Orlistat alone, those in the L-carnitine group improved faster and had greater improvement in weight loss, cholesterol, triglycerides, insulin resistance, and signs of inflammation, with no serious side effects.

### Alpha-lipoic acid helps weight, waist size

Doctors said that alpha-lipoic acid (ALA) is the “universal” antioxidant because it is both fat- and water-soluble, allowing it to protect a wider range of body systems. The researchers believe that ALA helps shift glucose into muscles and away from fat cells, increasing energy and reducing stored fat. In this study, scientists gave 1,127 overweight or obese men and women 800 mg of ALA per day. After four months, average blood pressure had declined significantly. Participants also had an average of two to four points lower body mass index scores. Obese women lost an average of 3.5 inches in waist size, and obese men 4.3 inches.

### Omega-3s reduced fat, signs of stress

Doctors in this study said the body releases the hormone cortisol to respond to stress, but when cortisol levels remain high, the body can become unhealthy. Researchers asked 44 healthy men and women, average age 34, to maintain their diet and exercise routines while taking 1,600 mg of eicosapentaenoic acid (EPA) plus 800 mg of docosahexaenoic acid (DHA), per day, or a placebo. After six weeks, compared to placebo, the omega-3 group had much lower levels of cortisol, much less fat mass, and more lean-muscle mass.

**REFERENCE:** CURRENT PHARMACEUTICAL DESIGN; 2010, VOL. 16, No. 7, 840-6

# Iron Men

## Nutrients help improve fitness and performance

### Creatine increases short-burst energy

Creatine helps muscles store the type of energy they need for strength, speed, and power in short bursts, called anaerobic exercise. In this study, 50 moderately trained men and women measured their maximum anaerobic running capacity on a series of treadmill tests over three days. Participants then took 5 grams of creatine four times per day, or a placebo. After five days, participants repeated the three-day treadmill test. While there was no effect in women, men who took creatine increased their anaerobic running capacity by 23 percent, without significant weight gain.

fully recover from new or strenuous exercise. In the study, 17 untrained men performed four sets of a single-leg resistance exercise. The men pressed, flexed, and then focused on extending the leg using 120 percent of the maximum load they could flex. Immediately after exercise and continuing for 14 days, the men took 35 grams of whey protein isolate three times per day, or a carbohydrate placebo. One day after exercise, men in the placebo group had lost 21 percent of their isometric strength compared to 12 percent for whey protein. Strength returned to normal for the placebo group in 14 days and in four days for whey protein.

amino acids plus carbohydrates, or a carbohydrate placebo, during 12 weeks of heavy-load leg strength training. All the men had significant increases in muscle mass and strength, with the amino acid group gaining the most size and developing the best muscle shape.

**REFERENCE:** JOURNAL OF STRENGTH AND CONDITIONING RESEARCH; 2010, VOL. 24, No. 7, 1826-33

### Whey protein helps muscles recover

Researchers in this study said muscles require amino acids to

### Essential amino acids boost muscles

In this study, 29 young men took a supplement containing all the essential



# Healthier Kids

Nutrients help kids behave, think, and feel better

## Mom's folic acid improves kids' behavior

Researchers in this study began measuring blood folate levels in 100 mothers at the 14th week of pregnancy, and followed up on their children's behavior for nine years. Kids whose moms had lower blood folate levels were more likely to be hyperactive and to have behavioral problems with peers. Moms who consumed an average of 466 mcg of folic acid per day had kids with larger head circumferences at birth than kids whose moms got an average of 413 mcg of folic acid per day, suggesting that folic acid influences brain development, doctors said.

## Iron and folic acid boost brain and body

Doctors in this study wanted to see if prenatal supplements in mothers could improve the mental and physical health of children. Researchers followed for two years 676 Nepalese children, aged 7 to 9, whose mothers had taken vitamin A with iron and folic acid, or a placebo of vitamin A, before and during pregnancy. Compared to kids whose mothers took only vitamin A, kids whose moms had taken iron and folic acid had greater intellectual ability and better control of fine muscle movements.

## Beta-carotene reduced allergy

Allergic diseases may be due in part to too few antioxidants in the diet, doctors in this study said. Researchers measured the diets and followed 861 children for eight years from birth. As levels of the antioxidant beta-carotene in the diet increased, allergy decreased. Those who consumed the most beta-carotene were 20 percent less likely to have allergy than those who got the least beta-carotene. Scientists also found fewer signs of allergic stress (antibodies) in kids who got the most beta-carotene.

REFERENCE: JOURNAL OF CHILD PSYCHOLOGY AND PSYCHIATRY; 2010, VOL. 51, No. 5, 594-602

MARCH'S

## Nutrient Focus

# Omega-3

New studies reveal the latest benefits of omega-3 polyunsaturated fatty acids

## Omega-3s may prevent age-related hearing loss

Researchers in this study measured the diets and hearing of 2,956 participants, aged at least 50, over the course of eight years. Compared to those who ate

less than one serving of fish per week, those who reported eating two or more servings of fish per week were 42 percent less likely to develop age-related hearing loss. Fish oils are rich in omega-3s.

AMERICAN JOURNAL OF CLINICAL NUTRITION; 2010, VOL. 92, No. 2, 416-21

Results were similar but slightly less for eicosapentaenoic acid (EPA).

JOURNAL OF THE AMERICAN DIETETIC ASSOCIATION; 2010, VOL. 110, No. 11, 1669-75

## Omega-3s lower blood fat and pressure

Some people inherit the tendency to have both high cholesterol and high triglycerides. In this study, 67 people with this inherited condition took omega-3s or a placebo. After 12 weeks, LDL cholesterol had not changed in either group, but compared to placebo, those who had taken omega-3 had 7 percent lower blood pressure, 8 percent lower levels of a sign of inflammation—high-sensitivity C-reactive protein—and 19 percent lower levels of triglycerides.

CARDIOVASCULAR DRUGS AND THERAPY; JANUARY 13, 2011, ELECTRONIC PREPUBLICATION

## Omega-3s reduce gum disease

In gum disease, the gums become infected and inflamed. Doctors in this study thought the anti-inflammatory properties of omega-3s might reduce the likelihood of gum disease. Researchers measured the diets of 9,182 men and women, aged at least 20, who had been given a dental exam. Those who consumed the most docosahexaenoic acid (DHA) were 20 percent less likely to have gum disease compared to those who got the least DHA.





York Downs Pharmacy  
3910 Bathurst Street  
Toronto, ON M3H 5Z3

Phone: (416) 633-2244  
Toll-Free: (800) 564-5020  
Website: [www.yorkdownsrx.com](http://www.yorkdownsrx.com)  
E-mail: [info@yorkdownsrx.com](mailto:info@yorkdownsrx.com)

*Store Hours:*

*Monday-Friday - 7:30 a.m.-7:00 p.m.*

*Saturday - 8:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m.*

*Sunday - 9:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m.*

## U.S. Recommends More Vitamin D

### Institute of Medicine raises guidelines for all Americans

On November 30, 2010, a panel of experts from the U.S. Institute of Medicine (IOM) recommended that all Americans take more vitamin D, updating its 1997 reference values. For people aged one to 69, the new Recommended Dietary Allowance (RDA) is now 600 IU of vitamin D per day, up from 200 IU per day for those under age 50, and up from 400 IU for those aged 50 to 70. For those aged 70 or more, the RDA is now 800 IU of vitamin D per day, up from 600 IU. For everyone nine years of age or older, IOM set the Tolerable Upper Intake Limit for vitamin D at 4,000 IU per day. While many recent studies suggest the need for even higher levels of vitamin D, and that vitamin D is safe, IOM

clearly recognizes that more vitamin D is necessary to maintain health.

**REFERENCE:** INSTITUTE OF MEDICINE OF THE NATIONAL ACADEMIES; REPORT, DIETARY REFERENCE INTAKES FOR CALCIUM AND VITAMIN D, NOVEMBER 30, 2010



## Thanks for shopping with us!

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.

♻️ Printed on Recycled Paper ©2011 RI