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High Blood Pressure

Consistent high blood pressure makes the arteries thick and rigid and contributes to atherosclerosis and thus cardiovascular disease. Related problems are kidney failure, blindness and strokes.

There are no consistent symptoms associated with high BP. It is therefore necessary to have it checked regularly, in particular after the age of 45.

Dietary factors are central to high blood pressure. Obesity, overweight, high sodium intake, low consumption of fibrous foods, excess stimulant intake (alcohol, sugar, chocolate, coffee), high intake of saturated trans fats and low intake of essential fats, low intake of calcium, magnesium and vitamin C, are all factors that increase the risk.

Lifestyle factors are just as important. A lack of exercise, stress and smoking are all strongly related to high BP. BP does increase with age and in some cases there might be a genetic predisposition. This would implicate extra vigilant dietary and lifestyle changes. Sometimes hormonal imbalances, kidney problems and medication (steroids, contraceptive pill) may cause high BP.

Mild hypertension can be corrected with a healthy lifestyle, a healthy diet and supplements. In cases of severe hypertension and when on medication it is still important to address nutritional and lifestyle factors, in order to minimise medication and their side effects.

Nutrient – Choline

Choline is usual grouped with the B-vitamins. It may prevent heart disease (transports cholesterol), improve cognitive ability (part neurotransmitter for memory, intelligence and mood) and even help with Alzheimer. Choline also helps improve the digestion of fats.

The foods richest in choline — are egg yolks, soy and cooked beef, chicken, veal and turkey livers. One dietary supplement is lecithin, derived from soy or egg yolks.

High-Fructose Corn Syrup

A new study in mice sheds light on at least part of the reason for the insulin resistance that can come from diets high in high-fructose corn syrup, a sweetener found in processed foods.

Fructose is much more readily metabolized to fat in the liver than glucose, and in the process can lead to nonalcoholic fatty liver disease. This in turn can lead to insulin resistance and type II diabetes.

High-Fructose Corn Syrup has also been connected to heart disease, high triglycerides and increased levels of bad cholesterol (LDL).

Source: *ScienceDaily* (Mar. 9, 2009) and www.mercola.com



Super Food - Eggs

Eggs have had a lot of bad press because they are high in cholesterol, but there is actually no correlation between oral intake of cholesterol and blood serum levels. If you don't eat cholesterol your body will manufacture it in the liver. If you eat more, the liver reduces its production. Eggs are a perfect source of protein and contain valuable vitamins and minerals.

However, there is genetic high cholesterol (hypercholesterolemia) where some have to limit their egg intake. This concerns mainly eggs that have been fried or exposed to air for a longer period and thus have become oxidised.

For a personal **Optimum Nutrition consultation** contact:
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Don't change your medication or start a supplement regime without consulting a health professional.