Broccoli & the Prostate

Men who consume more broccoli or cauliflower have a lower risk of prostate cancers that have spread beyond the prostate.

Researchers tracked more than 29,000 men in the Prostate, Lung, Colorectal and Ovarian Cancer Screening Trial. After four years, the risk of advanced prostate cancer (stage III or IV) was roughly half as high for those who ate broccoli or cauliflower more than once a week than for those who ate those vegetables less than once a month.

The researchers found no link with fruit, tomatoes, orange vegetables, beans, tofu, onions, or garlic. There was a hint that cabbage (alone or in coleslaw or sauerkraut) and spinach might protect the prostate, but the results were equivocal.

What to do: One study isn't proof, but why not toss some broccoli or cauliflower in the wok more than once a week? Sautéed, steamed, roasted, or raw, they're delish.


Whole Grains vs. Hypertension

Whole grains may lower the risk of high blood pressure, say researchers who followed roughly 29,000 middle-aged and older health professionals who participated in the Women's Health Study.

After ten years, those who ate at least four servings a day of whole grains (in breads, cereals, rice, pasta, popcorn, etc.) had a 23 percent lower risk of high blood pressure than those who averaged less than half a serving a day.

What to do: Make more of your grains whole. Other studies suggest that whole grains can cut the risk of heart disease and diabetes. How many reasons do you need?


No Muffin Top

Strength training may prevent a “muffin top”—when abdominal fat spills over your pants, says Kathryn Schmitz of the University of Pennsylvania School of Medicine.

Schmitz and colleagues randomly assigned 164 overweight or obese sedentary women aged 25 to 44 to one of two groups. One did strength training sessions for one hour twice a week the first year and for 45 minutes twice a week the second year. The control group was simply given a brochure that recommended aerobic exercise.

After two years, the strength trainers lost more body fat (3.7 percent) than the control group (0.1 percent) and gained less deep abdominal fat (7 percent) than the control group (21 percent).

What to do: Get pumping. Earlier studies showed that aerobic exercise reduces abdominal fat. This study suggests that building strength can also help keep you from building belly.


Is Spinach Eye Candy?

Lutein and zeaxanthin may protect the eyes from macular degeneration, which causes blindness in the center of one's vision.

Researchers studied more than 4,500 people aged 60 to 80 who had enrolled in the Age-Related Eye Disease Study. After six years, those who consumed the most lutein and zeaxanthin from their food had a 35 percent lower risk of macular degeneration than those who consumed the least.

The researchers found no links with vitamins C or E or beta-carotene.

What to do: Eat more spinach, kale, turnip greens, collard greens, romaine lettuce, broccoli, zucchini, corn, peas, and Brussels sprouts. Eggs are also a good source of lutein, but stick to no more than four yolks a week to keep a lid on your blood cholesterol.
