IN THE NEWS

Pomegranate Inhibits Hormone-dependent Breast Cancer Cell Growth

A report published in the journal *Cancer Prevention Research* reveals the discovery of researchers at City of Hope Hospital in Duarte, California of a suppressive effect for compounds found in pomegranate on the proliferation of breast cancer cells. *

City of Hope Division of Tumor Cell Biology director Shiuan Chen, PhD and his associates found that ten ellagitannins occurring in pomegranates had the potential to prevent estrogen-responsive breast cancer, with a metabolite of ellagic acid called urolithin B significantly inhibiting the growth of cultured breast cancer cells.

University of Texas M. D. Anderson Center Clinical Cancer Prevention Department chairman Powel Brown, MD, PhD is intrigued by the results. “This study does suggest that studies of the ellagitannins from pomegranates should be continued.”

He suggested that people “might consider consuming more pomegranates to protect against cancer development in the breast and perhaps in other tissues and organs.”

Editor’s note: Pomegranate extract is available in a number of dietary supplements.

—Dayna Dye

**Reference**

* Cancer Prev Res. 2010 Jan;3(1).

Low-carb Diet Effective for Lowering Blood Pressure

A recent study published in the *Archives of Internal Medicine* concluded that a low-carb diet may help lower blood pressure. * The study gave 146 patients either instructions on how to eat a low-carbohydrate diet, and to start the trial by eating 20 or fewer grams of carbohydrates daily, or to take 120 mg of a weight loss aid (orlistat) three times a day while eating a lower calorie, lower fat diet.

The patients were followed for 48 weeks, at the end of which the low-carb group had lost 9.5% of their body weight, compared to only 8.5% for the weight loss-aid group. While there were similar improvements in cholesterol levels between the two groups, the low-carb diet patients showed improvement in blood pressure.

The improvements amounted to a 5.9 point drop in their systolic blood pressure and a 4.5 point drop in their diastolic pressure, compared to only a 1.5 point systolic drop in the weight loss aid group, and a 0.4 point drop in diastolic.

—Jon Finkel

**Reference**

* Arch Int Med. 2010 Jan. 25.