

Western diet accountable for nearly a third of the world's heart attack risk

An article published online on October 21, 2008 in *Circulation: Journal of the American Heart Association* estimates that the diet typically consumed in Western countries, consisting of high amounts of meat, fried foods, and salty snacks, is responsible for approximately 30 percent of heart attack risk worldwide.

Salim Yusuf, DPhil and colleagues analyzed data from the INTERHEART study of heart attack risk factors among 16,000 participants in 52 countries. Five thousand seven hundred sixty-one participants diagnosed with heart attack were compared to 10,646 participants without known heart disease. The subjects were interviewed concerning dietary intake, including healthy as well as unhealthy food

consumption. The researchers identified three dietary patterns, which they labeled as Oriental, prudent or Western. Oriental diets were characterized by a higher intake of tofu, soy, and other sauces, the prudent pattern contained a greater intake of fruit and vegetables, and the Western diet included an increased amount of meat, eggs, salty snacks and fried foods.

While followers of a "prudent" diet had a 30 percent lower average heart attack risk compared with people who consumed few fruits and vegetables, those who reported a Western dietary pattern experienced a 35 percent greater risk of heart attack than those who consumed few or no fried foods or meat.

The Oriental pattern showed no effect on heart attack risk. While some components of an Oriental diet appear to help protect the heart, the researchers suggest that the diet's high sodium content could modify this benefit.

"A simple dietary score, which included both good and bad foods with the higher score indicating a worse diet, showed that 30 percent of the risk of heart disease in a population could be related to poor diet," concluded lead author Romania Iqbal.

"The objective of this study was to understand the modifiable risk factors of heart attacks at a global level," stated Dr Yusuf, who is a professor of medicine at McMaster University and director of the Population Health Research Institute at Hamilton Health Sciences in Ontario, Canada. "This study indicates that the same relationships that are observed in Western countries exist in different regions of the world."

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Health Concern**Coronary artery disease and atherosclerosis**

The treatment of atherosclerosis depends on the stage of the disease. Severe disease, in which an artery has significant blockage or unstable plaque deposits, may require intensive care. In most cases, however, less severe disease is treated with a combination of lifestyle changes (including dietary changes) and medication. The following dietary and lifestyle changes have been shown to slow, or even reverse, the effects of atherosclerosis:

- Reduce dietary saturated fats, cholesterol, and trans-fatty acids.
- Increase intake of fiber to at least 10 g daily.
- Consume at least five servings of fruits and vegetables daily.

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- Ensure adequate intake of folic acid (400 to 1000 mcg daily) to reduce homocysteine levels.
- For obese people, lower weight and increase physical activity to reduce the risk factors for metabolic syndrome and to help control blood pressure and reduce cardiac workload.
- For people with hypertension, limit sodium intake and maintain adequate intake of potassium, calcium, and magnesium.
- Stop smoking. This is essential.

Blood testing is a very important part of any risk-reduction program for coronary heart disease. Healthy adults should have their blood tested at least once a year. People who have heart disease or multiple risk factors should have their blood tested twice a year to monitor their progress. A comprehensive blood test will measure levels of blood lipids, C-reactive protein, homocysteine, fibrinogen, and other blood markers. Regular blood pressure monitoring is also important. Life Extension also recommends that people aim for low levels of C-reactive protein, LDL, homocysteine, and other markers of disease.

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pass on to the public how they use Bio-Identical Hormones and natural treatments to make menopause a breeze, to improve and to even cure diabetes, to help men regain their muscle and sexual function and more. You'll learn the up to date natural treatments that work for osteoporosis, wound healing and energy medicine. Learn which hormones will get rid of brain fog and improve your memory. Digestive problems rob your hormones. You'll learn how to find out what the real cause of the digestive problem is and how to fix it. Did you know that there are more testosterone receptors in the heart than in any other organ and that using testosterone can help so many heart patients?

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