

Southern Community Cohort Study

The Southern Community Cohort Study Newsletter is an annual publication for study participants.



Welcome,

We are pleased to bring you another issue of the Southern Community Cohort Study (SCCS) newsletter. We hope that you will find the features in this issue both informative and useful.

A recent report from the National Cancer Institute highlights the progress our country has made in reducing cancer deaths. Death rates for all cancers combined decreased by 1.8% per year among men and by 1.4% per year among women over the past 10 years, due to decreases for the 4 most common cancer sites: lung, colorectal, breast and prostate. However, having just one other serious medical condition, like diabetes, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (emphysema), congestive heart failure, or stroke, increased the probability of dying from cancer. This emphasizes the importance of PREVENTING cancer and these other serious diseases, which is a major goal of the SCCS.

We know that you are interested in knowing what YOU can do to PREVENT serious diseases. In this issue, we highlight healthy eating and several plant foods that may help keep you healthy.

We appreciate your participation in the SCCS! Please let us know if you move or change your phone number by calling the study office toll-free: 1(800) 734-5057.

Your Study Team Leaders,

Dr. William J. Blot
 Dr. Margaret K. Hargreaves
 Dr. Lisa B. Signorello
 Dr. Wei Zheng



Photo reprinted with permission from the Monroe Journal.

Mr. Gary's Garden

"We don't do sitting on the porch, looking up the road," said Mr. Silas Gary to his friend, Robert Butler, who had a stroke and worried he would never be able to paint again. Mr. Gary does not believe in living his retirement on the sidelines. He is actively involved with helping his friends and neighbors in Frisco City, Alabama. At 80 years old, he enjoys working in his organic vegetable garden by hand with only an old fashioned hoe and rake and sharing his produce with neighbors. This past year Mr. Gary added kale to his garden after reading about its health benefits in the 2013 SCCS Newsletter.

Mr. Gary doesn't just sit on his porch; instead he is always looking for ways to encourage each person with a kind word, good deed or a basket of his fresh vegetables. Mr. Gary joined our study in 2007 through the Tri-County Medical Center at the Frisco City Clinic in Alabama. You can read more about how Mr. Gary inspired his friend to paint again in the upcoming book *Timeless Echoes* by Robert Butler.

We remind you that we do not contact participants regarding any individual test results found from conducting our laboratory research as part of this study. Please remember to get your yearly check-up and all recommended health screenings.

Eat Your Phytochemicals!

Can Eating Plants Reduce Your Cancer Risk?



Please note that there are many other healthy fruits and vegetables that contain other nutrients and phytochemicals. We are focusing on the ten phytochemicals that you may not have heard of before.

In a set of Cancer Prevention Guidelines available on their website, the American Cancer Society recommends eating a variety of fruits and vegetables as part of a healthy diet to help prevent many chronic diseases, including cancer. Colorful fruits and vegetables contain thousands of “phytochemicals.” Phytochemicals can be vitamins, antioxidants, or other compounds that fight cancer-causing toxins in our bodies. In Dr. Walter Willett’s book, *Eat, Drink and Be Healthy*, he advises that phytochemicals usually work better when eaten in food rather than taken as a supplement.

The Stanford Cancer Center Newsletter recently featured a list that will familiarize you with ten of the most common phytochemicals. Above we have added an illustration of the type of foods that you can find them in. It’s recommended that you fill at least half of your plate with this “rainbow” of fruits and vegetables at every meal and aim for at least 2 ½ cups per day.

- Onions and garlic
- Blue and red berries like fresh strawberries, raspberries and blueberries
- Orange and deep green veggies like sweet potatoes, carrots, butternut squash and spinach
- Cruciferous veggies like cabbage, Brussels sprouts, cauliflower and broccoli
- Chickpeas, edamame and other soybean products
- Greens like collard, mustard, turnip and kale

- Citrus fruits and juices like lemon, lime, oranges and grapefruit
- Yellow and orange peppers, corn, zucchini and other squashes, as well as leafy green veggies already mentioned
- Cooked tomatoes and canned tomatoes products
- Beans of all colors, cereals and all nuts and some seeds like flax

This year, SCCS researchers will be using SCCS data to examine whether a high quality diet reduces illnesses and death from major chronic diseases, including cardiovascular disease, diabetes, and some types of cancer. They will use the “Healthy Eating Index” (developed by the National Cancer Institute and the US Department of Agriculture) to score adherence to guidelines such as the recommendation to eat fruits and vegetables that we have described here. Watch for the results next year.

Colorful fruits and vegetables are also naturally low in fat and calories, and high in fiber, so they help to control weight. Research suggests that a lowered risk of obesity helps to protect against chronic diseases, like heart disease, stroke, diabetes, and some forms of cancer.

One economical way to add phytochemicals to your diet is to be like Mr. Gary. Get involved in a home or community garden to grow your own fresh fruits and veggies for colorful, healthy eating!

Introducing Quinoa

One of the naturally “gluten-free” foods



Our recipe this year features what may be a new grain for some of you. Quinoa, pronounced “KEEN – wah,” has a mild taste, is light and yet filling, is easy to prepare and can be used in any dish in which you would normally use rice or pasta. This ancient grain is now widely available in stores, so we recommend that you buy it packaged in the “unprocessed” form as seeds that are uncooked and unseasoned. *It will need to be rinsed and drained prior to cooking.*

We recommend that you try quinoa for two reasons:

1. It's a whole grain that may be especially good for you. According to Dr. Andrew Weil's online newsletter, unlike rice or pasta, quinoa has high protein content and is a source of “complete protein.” That is why it is so filling, and can be used as a main dish or meat substitute. It is high in magnesium and is a good source of manganese, iron, copper, phosphorus and other essential minerals. It is also high in fiber and B vitamins.

2. It is a “gluten-free” grain. This new phrase is popping up everywhere. Dr. Arthur Agastan's book, *The South Beach Gluten Solution*, explains that gluten is a protein found in wheat and similar grains that can cause digestive problems for some people. If you've been told by your doctor that you have “gluten intolerance,” “gluten sensitivity,” or “celiac disease” you may need to cut back or stop eating products with gluten. Since quinoa does not contain any gluten, it is perfect for people trying to reduce the amount of gluten they eat. It is better for weight control than buying packaged foods that make the “gluten-free” claim, because those may contain added sugars, starches, fats and salt.

Recipe: Quinoa and Black beans



INGREDIENTS:

1 teaspoon vegetable oil
1 onion, chopped
3 cloves garlic, peeled and chopped
3/4 cup uncooked white pearl quinoa
1 1/2 cups vegetable broth
1 teaspoon ground cumin

1/4 teaspoon cayenne pepper
salt and pepper to taste
1 cup frozen corn kernels
2 (15 oz) cans black beans, rinsed
1/2 cup chopped fresh cilantro

Reprinted from www.Allrecipes.com
Recipe submitted by: 3LIONCUBS

DIRECTIONS:

Heat the oil in a medium saucepan over medium heat. Stir in the onion and garlic, and sauté until lightly browned.

Mix quinoa into the saucepan and cover with vegetable broth; mix. Season with cumin, cayenne pepper, salt and pepper. Bring the mixture to a boil. Cover, reduce heat, and simmer 20 minutes.

Stir frozen corn into the saucepan, and continue to simmer about 5 minutes until heated through.

Mix in the black beans and cilantro.

Nutrition Information

Servings per Recipe: 10 (double for a full meal)

Amount per Serving: Calories 153, Total Fat: 1.7g, Cholesterol: 0mg, Sodium: 517mg,

Total Carbohydrates: 27.8g, Dietary Fiber: 7.8g and Protein: 7.7g.





Be a Health Nut

Last fall, two other prevention studies, the Nurses' Health Study and the Health Professionals Follow-Up Study, published results (based on data from 76,000 women and 42,000 men) concluding that people who eat nuts are less likely to die from heart disease, respiratory disease or cancer than people who do not eat nuts.

Which nuts? Peanuts and tree nuts (almonds, Brazil nuts, cashews, hazelnuts, macadamias, pecans, pine nuts, pistachios, and walnuts) were equally effective.

How many nuts? The more days that nuts are eaten the stronger the effect, and the amount needs only to be a "handful" of nuts - or 1 ounce, which is a serving the size of a vending machine package of peanuts.

But will they make me fat? It is not true that nuts are so high in calories that they will keep you from maintaining a healthy weight. It was reported that "the regular nut-eaters were found to be more slender and had less weight gain than those who don't consume nuts." Nuts contain "good fats" (monounsaturated fatty acids), vegetable protein and fiber, and phytochemicals like vitamin E, the B vitamin folic acid, phenolic compounds, phytoestrogens, and the mineral selenium. Thus, they are a good source of filling and lasting nutrition in a handy, snack form.

Are nut-eaters different from other people? The report added that "nut-eaters were found to be more likely to take multivitamins, eat fruits and vegetables, and exercise – and less likely to smoke." OK then, let's all become "health nuts!"



It's important we have your most current contact information. Please help us stay in touch with you! If your address or telephone number has changed, please call us at 1-800-734-5057 Monday through Friday 9am-5pm (Eastern Time).

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