

B Vitamins May Lower Risk of Age-Related Vision Loss

From Brigham and Women's Hospital

Age-related macular degeneration (AMD) is a leading cause of vision loss in older Americans, and the only previously known method of preventing it is to not smoke. New research from Brigham and Women's Hospital finds that taking a combination of vitamins B6 and B12 and folic acid (also called vitamin B9) appears to decrease the risk of AMD in women.

"Women taking the supplements had a 34-percent lower risk of any AMD and a 41-percent lower risk of visually significant AMD. The beneficial effects began approximately two years after the start of treatment and lasted throughout the trial," says William G. Christen, Sc.D., of Brigham and Women's Hospital and Harvard Medical School in Boston.

The study involved 5,205 middle-aged and older women who had heart disease or an elevated risk of heart disease. Over roughly seven years of treatment and follow-up, the researchers noted 137 new cases of AMD. Of these, 55 cases occurred in the women in the active treatment group and 82 occurred in women taking a placebo.

"These findings apply to the early stages of disease development and may be the first identified way – other than not smoking – to reduce the risk of AMD in individuals at an average risk," Dr. Christen says. From a public health perspective, this is particularly important because persons with early AMD are at increased risk of developing advanced AMD, which is the leading cause of severe, irreversible vision loss in older Americans."

This research is published in the February 23 issue of *Archives of Internal Medicine*.

Dear Reader,

With warm weather upon us, we have packed our newsletter with articles and tips from our Consortium hospitals for a healthy summer, including nutrition advice, a wholesome summer recipe, and a study showing the importance of getting your vitamins. Have a safe and healthy summer!

Sincerely,

Rebika Shaw,

Regional Director, Corporate Communications

HEALTH NEWS

Keep Supporting Kids' Exercise and Good Nutrition This Summer

From Duke University

As kids relax and enjoy the summer, Sarah Armstrong, MD, a pediatrician at Duke University Medical Center in Durham, North Carolina, wants parents to know that poor summertime eating habits could contribute to weight gain in kids. Sweet treats are part of summer's fun, but only when eaten in moderation. Here's how to stay on track over the coming months:

Get enough sleep. "When kids stay up late, they are more likely to watch TV and snack on ... low-nutrient foods," she says. And a shorter night's sleep limits the body's production of leptin, a hormone known to promote satiety. That means kids wake up hungrier and are quicker to reach for high-carb, calorie rich foods.

Take a fast food vacation. Kids crave fast food, but that doesn't mean you should park your family at the nearest McDonalds every day to escape the heat. Trade French fries and burgers for picnics at the park or beach. Be sure to load the cooler with healthy alternatives like turkey sandwiches or light salads. Whatever you choose, "Incorporate protein in every meal. It releases insulin at a slower rate, and that keeps your blood sugars – and your energy level – constant throughout the day," Dr. Armstrong says.

Limit the sweet stuff. Carnivals, fairs, vacations, and beaches are magnets for candy-coated apples, sugar-sprinkled funnel cakes, and slushies. "I would never tell a parent not to give their child cotton candy, but I do tell them to balance the bad with the good." Likewise, when they're hot and thirsty, keep sweetened fruit juices, teas, and sodas to a minimum, and opt instead for thirst-quenching water.

Keep active! Sure it's hot, and few kids want to run around outdoors in the heat of the day. But find other ways to stay active. Encourage swim races at the pool and playing tag at dusk. If all else fails, turn on the Wii in an air conditioned room. Keep exercise a part of *your* vacation too. Biking, jogging, and other active activities, rather than lazing at the pool or beach, will do everyone's body and brain a whole lot of good.



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NEWS ON WORLDCARE

WorldCare Personal Cancer Network™ launched. WorldCare now provides cancer patients in the Middle East with access to advanced scientific expertise to assist in managing their illness, through a partnership with N-of-One. The service is a unique combination of leading-edge scientific analysis, patient advocacy and personalized consultation with world experts in oncology, allowing patients and their medical teams to make highly informed, evidence-based treatment choices in their fight against cancer.

“Very Impressive”

Patient Perspective

“I was very impressed with the manual I received back from WorldCare. It was very thorough and detailed. It was strictly personalized and well organized. Once WorldCare had all the info, I received the second opinion very quickly.” – L. Dunlap, WorldCare member

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Recipe: Ginger-marinated grilled portobello mushrooms

By Mayo Clinic staff

Because of their larger size and firmer texture, portobello mushrooms are good candidates for stuffing or grilling. They have a satisfying taste and texture with virtually no fat or sodium.

Here’s a great way to enjoy them:

Ingredients (serves 4)

- 4 large portobello mushrooms
- ¼ cup balsamic vinegar
- ½ cup pineapple juice
- 2 tablespoons chopped fresh ginger, peeled
- 1 tablespoon chopped fresh basil

Directions

Clean mushrooms with a damp cloth and remove their stems. Place in a glass dish, stemless (gill) side up.

To prepare the marinade, whisk together in a small bowl the vinegar, pineapple juice, and ginger. Drizzle the marinade over the mushrooms. Cover and let marinate in the refrigerator for about 1 hour, turning mushrooms once.

Prepare a hot fire in a charcoal grill or heat a gas grill or broiler. Away from the heat source, lightly coat the grill rack or broiler pan with cooking spray. Position the cooking rack 4 to 6 inches from the heat source.

Grill or broil the mushrooms on medium heat, turning often, until tender, about 5 minutes

on each side. Baste with marinade to keep from drying out. Using tongs, transfer the mushrooms to a serving platter. Garnish with basil and serve immediately.

Nutritional Analysis (per serving)

Serving size: 1 mushroom		Fiber	2 g
Calories	69	Total fat	0 g
Cholesterol	0 mg	Potassium	778 mg
Protein	4 g	Saturated fat	0 g
Sodium	10 mg	Calcium	19 mg
Carbohydrate	14 g	Monounsaturated fat	0 g



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