

## HEALTHY LIFESTYLES FOR HEALTHY AGING

MAY | 2008 | ISSUE 7

### Study Says Government-Recommended DASH Diet Lowers Heart Disease: Is there more to the story?

The latest study (funded by NIH grants) on the DASH diet—the government-recommended, heart-smart Dietary Approaches to Stop Hypertension plan—suggests it not only reduces blood pressure, but decreases coronary heart disease (CAD) and stroke risk in middle-aged women. Although the study focused on women, experts believe men could benefit from such a diet as well. But is there more you should know about this nutritional plan? We think there is.

Published this year in the April 14 issue of *Archives of Internal Medicine*, the prospective cohort study assessed the DASH diet 7 times in a 24-year follow-up period (1980-2004), using validated food frequency questionnaires. Investigators studied 88,517 female nurses, ages 34-59, who had no history of CAD or diabetes in 1980. They calculated DASH scores based on eight food and nutrient components: fruits, vegetables, whole grains, nuts/legumes, low-fat dairy, sodium, red/processed meats, sweetened beverages.

DASH scores rose when subjects consumed more of the first five nutrient components: fruits, vegetables, whole grains, nuts/legumes and low-fat dairy (recommended amounts). Conversely, the DASH scores diminished when they ate sodium, red/processed meats and sweetened beverages.

These measurements confirmed the number of “incident cases of nonfatal myocardial infarction, CHD death and stroke.” Researches documented 2,129 cases of CHD deaths and 3,105 stroke cases; after adjusting for age, smoking and other cardiovascular risk factors, they found those following the DASH diet had 18% fewer strokes and 24% less fatal/non-fatal CAD than those with lower DASH scores.



Lead author, Dr. Teresa T. Fung, Department of Nutrition, Simmons College (Boston, MA), and her colleagues concluded that to their knowledge, the study provides the “strongest evidence to date on the long-term benefits of the DASH diet in the primary prevention of cardiovascular disease among healthy subjects.” Per the investigators, study subjects with the highest DASH scores also lived healthier lives—they exercised, were typically nonsmokers and consumed higher fiber and omega-3 fatty acids.

In an April 14, 2008 article on CNN.com—“Blood pressure diet aids against heart attack, stroke”—Dr. Nieca Goldberg commented on the study’s impact on patients. Goldberg, medical director of New York University’s Women’s Heart Program, pointed out that “many patients would rather take a pill than adjust their eating habits” but tells patients that “if you make these changes in your lives, it could . . . keep you off medication in the long run.”

**Beyond the DASH diet.** Focused on reducing hypertension, DASH includes whole grain products, fish, poultry and nuts—as well as reduced lean red meat, sweets, added sugars and sugar-containing beverages. The diet also is rich in potassium, magnesium, calcium, protein and fiber.

And yet, lowering blood pressure and CAD risks is only one piece of the puzzle. There is much more to the story when your goal is optimized health.

A low-glycemic nutritional plan has shown to not only aid in reducing blood pressure and CAD, but also improve overall health and body composition. It focuses on natural foods—not just lower-glycemic fruits and vegetables, but also factoring in how foods are combined.

**Better health means a better plan.** Here’s how the CeneGenics’ low-glycemic approach goes one better than DASH.

**continued on page 2**

CENEGENICS LOW-GLYCEMIC NUTRITIONAL APPROACH	GOVERNMENT-RECOMMENDED DASH DIET
Individualized plans, based on extensive evaluation process, medical needs/health goals	Generic across the board, regardless of patient's needs
Includes healthy fats, such as extra virgin olive oil, avocado, seeds, fish oil, raw/unsalted nuts such as almonds, walnuts, pistachios, cashews, macadamias etc.	Avoids healthy fats, such as butter, cheeses & oils
Includes natural lean animal protein	Avoids natural, lean animal protein
Monitors carbohydrate intake to minimize the effect insulin has on hormone levels; natural carbohydrates from fruits and vegetables are encouraged; serving amount of refined carbs (whole or natural grain) based on patient's daily exercise intensity/energy needs: whole grains, such as rye, pumpernickel, oats, etc.	Requires a minimum of 2 servings whole grains per day
Patients have "Mardi Gras" once a week, minimizing effect sweets have on hormone levels	2-4 sweets (pastries, etc.) per week
1-2 servings per day of raw/unsalted legumes (variety of beans, peas, lentils, etc.), which are rich in omega 3s and 9s, and provide much-needed, small, frequent meals daily	Legumes limited to 3-6 per week
Natural, complete protein, including eggs, chicken, turkey, fish and, for variety, occasionally red meats	Protein sources are all lean meats or vegetables
Beverages: For every pound of body weight, drink ½ ounce of water daily—more when other factors are involved that would dehydrate, such as hot weather, exercise, caffeine/alcohol. Moderate coffee consumption, herbal teas, evening dry red wine, protein shake. Generally no fruit/vegetable juices since fibrous pulp is removed and mostly sugar water; juices taken with protein or good fat	Encourages fewer servings of sugar-containing beverages and moderate alcohol intake
Encourages snacks between main meals: a low-glycemic fruit or vegetables combined with protein or good fat, such as apples and peanut butter, full-fat Greek yogurt and strawberries, smoked salmon and cucumbers, etc.	Snacks include graham crackers, unsalted rice cakes, low-fat/no-fat yogurt, nuts with raisins, unsalted/unbuttered popcorn, raw vegetables
Factors in effect of how foods are eaten: eating every 3-4 hours to stimulate metabolism; considers meal timing with relation to exercise.	No consideration noted on meal frequency or its metabolic effects
Balances low-glycemic carbs with healthy, complete protein and fat*	Focuses on foods, not how they are combined
Encourages free-range, grass-fed animal products, shown to have higher-nutrient content and be hormone free, as well as omega-3 eggs (chickens eat flaxseed)	Not specified

\* Example: A banana has little carbohydrates, but is a high-glycemic food, meaning it's absorbed quickly and spikes blood sugar. But you can transform that into a low-glycemic snack by controlling the absorption rate—eat it with protein or fat, such as a spoonful of peanut butter. Other examples include an apple with a piece of cheese, yogurt with a banana, salad dressing on your salad.

**Go beyond medical excellence.**  
**Learn more about personalized Cenegenics programs and the science behind age management medicine.**  
**Call 866.953.1510 today.**

**The Cenegenics difference.** The path to a longer health span and higher-quality life begins with an intensive evaluation process, far beyond your annual checkups. A comprehensive, preliminary blood panel and lifestyle questionnaire coupled with a six- to seven-hour evaluation day of diagnostics and consultation with your Cenegenics medical team deliver a complete picture of your health strengths and weakest links.

Your Cenegenics medical team—certified age-management physician, nutritionist and exercise physiologist—partner with you to design a full-faceted program that targets your short- and long-term health goals: low-glycemic nutrition, appropriate exercise, nutraceuticals (even a healthy diet needs vitamins, minerals, essential fatty acids and antioxidants) and hormone optimization (if clinically indicated).

It's the science behind age management medicine that helps us identify and meet criteria, which places you in the lowest possible risk category for disease—particularly heart disease, cancer, stroke, diabetes, metabolic syndrome and Alzheimer's disease—which ultimately extends your health span.

**Questions on the Cenegenics low-glycemic approach?** Email Cicely Valenti, our nutrition/exercise manager and senior counselor: [cvalenti@cenegenics.com](mailto:cvalenti@cenegenics.com).

**Learn more about healthy nutrition from the global leader in age management medicine, Cenegenics Medical Institute.**

**Call Cenegenics today: 866.953.1510.  
Discussions are always confidential and without obligation.**

