

REAL NEWS

June 2011

What Shape is In?

Is it healthier to be apple-shaped or pear-shaped? A new study, published online in *The Lancet*, found that extra weight increases the risk of cardiovascular disease, no matter what your body shape may be.

Researchers reviewed data from 221,934 adults from 17 countries, with no history of cardiovascular disease, who were enrolled in prospective studies in which three factors – body mass index (BMI), waist circumference, and waist-to-hip ratio – were recorded at baseline. The patients were followed for 10 years, during which time 4,982 people suffered a heart attack, 3,308 had a fatal heart attack, 2,763 had a non-fatal stroke, 143 suffered a fatal stroke, 596 had a brain hemorrhage, 2,070 had a stroke of unknown kind, and 435 had a different kind of cardiovascular event.

Researchers adjusted outcomes for age, gender, and smoking status, then calculated the effect of systolic blood pressure, history of diabetes, and cholesterol levels. They found that people with a history of diabetes tended to be heavier and had bigger waists and higher waist-to-hip ratios than people without diabetes, regardless of BMI. Similarly, participants with higher levels of non-HDL cholesterol, triglycerides, systolic blood pressure, and other blood factors associated with cardiovascular disease tended to have larger waist circumferences and higher waist-to-hip ratios.

In other words, BMI, waist size, and waist-to-hip ratio, whether assessed singly or in combination, did not improve prediction of cardiovascular risk when systolic blood pressure, diabetes status, and blood lipid levels were known. The exception was low BMI, which was associated with decreased risk.

The study authors stressed the importance of controlling weight in order to lower risk, as well as the need to control blood pressure, cholesterol, and diabetes to counteract the effect of extra weight on cardiovascular risk. And, although BMI did not add a great deal to conventional risk factors, they suggested that physicians continue to take advantage of this free, quick calculation, which they called “an early warning sign of cardiovascular disease”.

So... apple or pear? It depends on which Waldorf salad you ordered.

-- *DukeMedicine's HealthNews*

Exercise of the Month: **Bulgarian split-squat**

- With one foot on the floor, place the other foot behind you on a bench (or other flat, stable surface) with the ball of the foot in contact with the bench.
- Bend your front knee to approximately 90 degrees, allowing the rear knee to lower towards the floor. Do not allow the front knee to move beyond the front toes. Back remains in neutral position. Repeat and switch legs.
- Muscles worked: Quadriceps, hamstrings, and gluteal muscles of the front leg, with the iliopsoas group contributing to the action of the rear leg.





Recipe of the Month:

Chicken Breasts Stuffed with Pimiento Cheese

Ingredients:

4 small boneless, skinless chicken breasts, trimmed and tenders removed

1/2 cup shredded Gouda cheese, preferably smoked 2 tablespoons chopped scallion

1 tablespoon sliced pimientos, chopped 1 teaspoon paprika, divided

1/2 teaspoon freshly ground pepper, divided 1/2 teaspoon salt, divided

1 tablespoon extra-virgin olive oil

Instructions:

Preheat oven to 400°F.

Combine Gouda, scallion, pimientos and 1/2 teaspoon paprika in a small bowl.

Cut a horizontal slit along the thin, long edge of each chicken breast, nearly through to the opposite side, and open like a book. Sprinkle the breasts with 1/4 teaspoon each salt and pepper. Divide the cheese filling among the breasts, placing it in the center of each. Close the breast over the filling, pressing the edges firmly together to seal. Sprinkle the breasts with the remaining 1/2 teaspoon paprika, 1/4 teaspoon salt and pepper.

Heat oil in a large ovenproof skillet over medium-high heat. Add the chicken and cook until browned on one side, about 2 minutes. Turn the chicken over and transfer the skillet to the oven. Bake until the chicken is no longer pink in the center and an instant-read thermometer inserted into the thickest part registers 165°F, about 15 minutes.

Nutrition:

Calories: 200

Total fat: 10 g

Fiber: 0 g

Carbs: 1 g

Sat fat: 3 g

Pot: 232 mg

Protein: 26 g

Chol: 76 mg

Sodium: 445 mg

Researchers studied information from the Swedish Twin Registry on 8,534 twins age 65 or older. Of those, 350 were diagnosed with dementia and 114 had possible dementia. The study found that people who were overweight or obese at midlife had an 80 percent higher risk of developing dementia, Alzheimer's disease or vascular dementia in late life compared to people with normal BMI. – *HealthCanal.com*

"Intensive therapeutic lifestyle changes" can cut triglyceride levels in half, according to a new American Heart Association scientific statement, which recommends diet and exercise rather than drugs to lower blood levels of these fats. The expert report, based on analysis of 500 studies over 30 years, reaffirmed that high triglycerides don't directly contribute to arterial plaque, but are an important marker of heart-disease risk. All people with levels in the borderline to high range (150-199 mg/dL) or higher should boost physical activity of at least moderate intensity to 150 minutes a week or more, the report advised. Those with high triglycerides should limit added sugars, fructose from natural sources and processed foods, saturated fats and trans fats, while working to lose weight. - *Tufts*

Harvard researchers report that men who regularly drink coffee appear to have a lower risk of developing a lethal form of prostate cancer. The study looked at data on 47,911 men in the Health Professionals Follow-Up Study who reported their coffee consumption every four years from 1986 to 2008. During the study period, 5,035 cases of prostate cancer were reported, including 642 fatal or metastatic cases. Men who consumed the most coffee (six or more cups daily) had nearly a 20% lower risk of developing any form of prostate cancer. The inverse association with coffee was even stronger for aggressive prostate cancer: Men who drank the most coffee had a 60% lower risk of developing lethal prostate cancer, and even drinking one to three cups of coffee per day was associated with a 30% lower risk. The reductions in risk were seen whether the men drank decaffeinated or regular coffee, so compounds in coffee besides caffeine, such as antioxidants, appear to be responsible. - *Journal of the National Cancer Institute*

STEPS
REAL WELLNESS. REAL PEOPLE.