

Family Living

Key Nutrients Reduce Blood Pressure In Children

A national study that included 127 Portland-area children has found that consuming more calcium and fiber while eating less dietary fat reduces children's blood pressure levels. Results of an analysis of diet and blood pressure from the Dietary Intervention Study in Children (DISC) appear in the April 8 issue of Hypertension, a journal of the American Heart Association.

DISC researchers found that these dietary changes led to small but significant reductions in blood pressure among 662 boys and girls aged 8-11 who participated in the three-year study. All had higher than normal levels of LDL or a "bad" cholesterol. Increasing the daily intake of calcium by 330 milligrams and of fiber by 4 grams while reducing total fat intake by 19 grams led to a drop of 2.5 mm/Hg in diastolic blood pressure, the lower number in a blood pressure reading.

"These dietary changes," says Merwyn R. Greenlick, PhD, an investigator for DISC at Kaiser Permanente's Center for Health Research and one of the article's authors, "should be fairly easy for children--and their parents--to achieve. Three hundred thirty milligrams of calcium is equivalent to one eight-ounce glass of low-fat milk, four grams of fiber is about 1/4 cup of all-bran cereal or 1-2 servings of fruits or vegetables, and 19 grams of fat is a little less than two tablespoons of butter."

Children who have high blood pressure very often become adults who have high blood pressure, so reducing children's blood pressure levels could have a significant impact on the health status of adults. As the study's authors point out, "A downward shift of 2mm/Hg in systolic blood pressure [the upper number in a blood pressure reading] would save about 12,000 lives per year in the United States."

The results from DISC showed that lowering systolic blood pressure by 2 mm/Hg could be achieved by reducing total fat by 40 grams a day, the equivalent of 4 tablespoons of butter of a little more than on Big Mac hamburger.

Funded by the National Heart, Lung and Blood Institute, DISC was the first large, randomized clinical study to look at the long-term safety and effectiveness of lower-fat diets on children who had high levels of "bad" LDL cholesterol, which leads to the narrowing of blood vessels that can result in heart attacks and stroke. Earlier DISC results, published in the Journal of the American Medical Association (May 10, 1995), showed that the children who ate the lower fat diet had a significant decrease in LDL cholesterol levels, received adequate nutrition, and posted growth and psychological well-being scores equivalent to the scores of the children in the control group.

"The findings of this study are particularly important," says Greenlick, "because they provide a convincing case that children can make modest changes in the way they eat that, if continued throughout their lives, will have major positive effects in their adult health."

Other DISC sites besides Kaiser Permanente's Center for Health Research in Portland were:

- Johns Hopkins University and the Maryland Medical Research Institute in Baltimore;
- Northwestern University Medical School in Chicago;
- University of Iowa in Iowa City;
- University of Pittsburgh;
- New Jersey Medical School in Newark, N.J.;
- Children's Hospital in New Orleans

Kaiser Permanente's Center for Health Research is a not-for-profit research institute that conducts health research in the public interest. Greenlick is the Center's founder and former director.

Kaiser Permanente is a prepaid group practice health maintenance organization serving the health care needs of more than 4.1 million people in Oregon and Southwest Washington.

Northeast Loaves & Fishes Needs Meals-on-Wheels Volunteer Drivers

Define "senior citizens": Adults who have survived the challenges of growing up, have overcome "mid-life" crises, have gained in wisdom and retained enough vitality to settle back and enjoy their "golden years"? Visit Loaves & Fishes' Northeast Center and you will find active, healthy, older adults who fit this glowing definition of "senior citizens." They are Loaves & Fishes volunteers. Few in numbers but deeply devoted, these seniors are the "life blood" of Loaves & Fishes at the Northeast MultiCultural Center. Working together, they struggle each day to meet the needs of frail, elderly people living in Northeast Portland who must rely upon Loaves & Fishes' hot meals and other life saving nutritional services.

However, Center Manager, Dorit Riser-Doron says Northeast Loaves & Fishes is experiencing a real crisis: lack of available volunteers. "We need more volunteers to drive Meals-on-Wheels. Applicants should be eighteen years of age, have valid drivers licenses, be available between the hours of 11:00 am and 1:00 pm, Mondays through Fridays, be able to lift 20 lb. and have reliable transportation to make meal deliveries."

Call 248-5211 to find out how you can help, today. Northeast Loaves & Fishes is located in the Northeast MultiCultural Senior Center, 5325 NE MLK Blvd.

Northeast Loaves & Fishes is part of Loaves & Fishes Centers, Inc., a private, non profit organization which serves 3,600 meals per day to Portland area seniors. For general information regarding Loaves & Fishes Centers, Inc., call 777-2424.

Baking Fun At Camp Cookie

Relieve The Dog Days of Summer With Your Own Camp Cookie

Not everyday is a day at the beach...or even the neighborhood pool for that matter! Kids naturally get antsy and are always looking for new, fun activities. Not to worry, mom. Land O' Lakes has the answer for when you've run out of ideas. Open a Camp Cookie in your own kitchen.

Feel like your house is sometimes a three-ring circus? Use it to your advantage by creating an edible, delectable zoo of baked goods while teaching kids some kitchen basics. The Camp Cookie Counselors from Land O' Lakes Test Kitchens have practical tips to keep creatures big and small entertained for hours.

Setting Up Camp Cookie

For an authentic camp feeling, outfit the campers with a bandanna,

camping hat and knapsack filled with favorite cookie cutters. Now, they're ready for the wild outdoors!

Clear a large work space to let kids spread out.

If you don't have hats, be sure to tie back long hair.

Roll up sleeves and protect children's clothing with an apron or old T-shirt.

Wash, rinse and dry hands before starting--encourage frequent washing throughout, especially after scraping the bowl and licking fingers.

A Teaspoon of Instructions

Choose kid-oriented recipes. For example, kids love rolling dough and using cookie cutters to create favorite animal shapes and characters.

Read the entire recipe carefully before beginning.

Teach correct measuring techniques. Use graduated measuring cups for dry ingredients and clear glass/plastic cups with pouring spouts for milk and other liquids. Show kids the markings on the butter wrapper for easy measuring.

Organize recipe ingredients and equipment before you start. Children can help gather the ingredients and utensils needed for the recipe.

A Hint Of Safety

Always supervise children as they work in the kitchen.

Explain the importance of keeping wet hands away from appliances and electrical outlets.

Keep children away from dangerous appliances; only adults should use these appliances.

Inform children about being careful not to touch hot surfaces, such as the oven or stove.

Teach children to pick up knives by handles only.

Add Imagination To Taste

Encourage creativity and fun by providing colorful icings, sprinkles and candies for decorating cookies. Chocolate sprinkles make great fur, red candy drops become animal noses and raisins serve as perfect eyes. Allow children to be as creative as they wish--remember, there is no wrong way to decorate a cookie!

Let kids cut out their own unusual shapes using a table knife so they move beyond the constraints of a cookie cutter and use their imagination to its fullest.

Serve With A Smile

Display cookies in a fun, creative way. Invent a theme and arrange the cookies to make a cute exhibit for friends and family to "ooh and ahh" over. For example, bake up cookies in animal shapes and cut construction paper to build "cages."

This recipe for a successful Camp Cookie serves an entire neighborhood of kids for a whole afternoon! For more delicious recipes for those hungry, close-to-home campers and more tips for making your Camp Cookie a success, send a self-addressed envelope to: Camp Cookie Recipe Leaflet,

P.O. Box 39104, Chicago, IL 60639 or call 1-800-782-9602 and ask for the Camp Cookie Recipe Leaflet.

Bake Up Sweet Treats at Camp Cookie

Creating a Camp Cookie at home is a great way for parents and kids to have fun together--teach them the tricks of baking to stir up their imaginations and bake yummy treats. Try delicious Chew Jumbo Chocolate Chip Cookies and Chocolate Pixies from the counselors at Land O' Lakes Camp Cookie and go wild in the kitchen.

Chocolate Pixies

Preparation time: 20 minutes

Chilling time: 2 hours

Baking time: 12 minutes

- 1/4 cup Land O' Lakes Butter
- 4 (1-ounce) squares unsweetened baking chocolate
- 2 cups all-purpose flour
- 2 cups sugar
- 4 eggs
- 2 teaspoons baking powder
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1/2 cup chopped walnuts or pecans
- Powdered sugar

In 1-quart saucepan melt butter and chocolate over low heat (8-10 minutes); cool. In large mixer bowl combine melted chocolate and all remaining ingredients Except 1 cup flour, nuts and powdered sugar. Beat at medium speed, scraping bowl often until well mixed (2 to 3 minutes). By hand, stir in remaining 1 cup flour and nuts. Cover; refrigerate until firm (2 hours or overnight). Heat oven to 300 degrees. Shape rounded teaspoonfuls of dough into 1-inch balls; roll in powdered sugar. Place 2 inches apart on greased cookie sheets. Bake for 12 to 15 minutes or until firm to the touch. 4 dozen cookies.

Nutrition Facts (1 cookie)

- Calories 90
- Protein 2 g
- Carbohydrates 13 g
- Fat 3 g
- Cholesterol 20 mg
- Sodium 50 mg





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