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Labor Day
Occurs on the first Monday of September. The first Labor Day was celebrated on Tuesday, September 5, 1882.

Special Points Of Interest

🍏 Top 5 foods to lower your cholesterol numbers

☞ Caffeine how much is too much?

Human Behavior Associates

Treating People Right

September 2010

Top 5 Foods to Lower Your Numbers

September is National Cholesterol education month. And what better way to discuss the top 5 foods that can aid in helping lower your cholesterol numbers.

🍏 Soluble fiber reduces your low density lipoprotein (LDL), the “bad” cholesterol. Soluble fiber is also found in such foods as kidney beans, apples, pears, barley and prunes. Soluble fiber can reduce the absorption of cholesterol into your blood stream. Five to 10 grams or more of solu-

ble fiber a day decreases your total and LDL cholesterol. Eating 1 1/2 cups of cooked oatmeal provides 6 grams of fiber. If you add fruit,



such as bananas, you will add about 4 more grams of fiber. To mix it up a little try steel-cut oatmeal or cold cereal

made with oatmeal or oat bran.

🍏 Eating fatty fish can be heart-healthy because of its high levels of omega-3 fatty acids, which can reduce your blood pressure and risk of developing blood clots. In people who have already had heart attacks, fish oil, or omega-3 fatty acids reduces the risk of sudden death.

Doctors recommend eating at least two servings of fish a week. The highest levels of omega-3 fatty acids are in:

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Caffeine: How Much is too Much?

If you rely on caffeine to wake you up and keep you going, you are not alone. Caffeine stimulates the central nervous system, alleviating fatigue and increasing wakefulness. For most people, moderate doses of caffeine, 200 to 300 milligrams or about two to four cups of

brewed coffee a day are not harmful. But some circumstances may warrant limiting or even ending your caffeine routine. Though moderate caffeine intake isn't likely to cause harm, too much can noticeably affect your health. Heavy daily caffeine use “more than 500 to 600 mg

a day”, or about four to seven cups of coffee may cause:

- ☞ Insomnia
- ☞ Nervousness
- ☞ Restlessness
- ☞ Irritability
- ☞ Nausea or other gastrointestinal problems

Continued ~ Caffeine: How Much is too Much?



Ah, a nice cup of coffee or is it?

Keep these tips in mind...

- ☞ Keep Tabs
- ☞ Cut Back
- ☞ Go Decaf
- ☞ Make it quick or herbal
- ☞ Check the bottle

☞ Muscle tremors

☞ Headache

☞ Anxiety

Some people are more sensitive to caffeine than are others. How you react to caffeine may be determined in part by the amount of caffeine you are used to drinking. Other factors may include body mass, age, smoking habits, drug or hormone use, stress and health conditions such as anxiety disorders. Research suggests that men are more susceptible to caffeine than are women.

Most adults need seven to eight hours of sleep each night. But caffeine can interfere with this much needed sleep. Using caffeine to mask sleep deprivation can create an unwelcome cycle. Caffeine can also increase the number of times you wake up during the night and interfere with deep sleep, making your night less restful. You wake up tired the next day and reach for your morning jolt of Java. The best way to break the cycle is to reduce the caffeine and add more hours of quality sleep each day. Try to avoid caffeinated beverages eight hours before you desired bedtime. Your body doesn't store caffeine, but it takes many hours for it to eliminate the stimulant and its effects.

Here is something to think about, certain medications and herbal supplements negatively interact with caf-

feine.

Some antibiotics, Ciprofloxacin (Cipro) and norfloxacin (Noroxin) types of antibacterial medications can interfere with the breakdown of caffeine. This may increase the length of time caffeine remains in your body and amplify its unwanted effects.

Theophylline (Theo-24, Uniphyll, others) this medication which opens up bronchial airways by relaxing the surrounding muscles (a bronchodilator) tends to have some caffeine like effects. Taking it along with caffeinated foods and beverages may increase the concentration of theophylline in your blood. This may cause some ill effects.

Ephedra (ma_huang), this herbal dietary supplement increases your risk of heart attack, stroke, seizures and death. Combined with caffeine, it becomes especially risky. The Food and Drug Administration has banned ephedra because of health concerns. The ban applies to dietary supplements but not herbal teas, which may still contain this herb. Remember, to talk with your doctor or pharmacist about whether caffeine might affect your prescription. He or she can say whether you need to reduce or eliminate caffeine from your diet.

Cutting back on caffeine can be challenging. Too abrupt a decrease in caffeine can cause caffeine withdrawal with

signs and symptoms such as headaches, fatigue, irritability and nervousness. Fortunately, these symptoms usually resolve after several days. Change your caffeine habit more gradually, try these tips:

Keep tabs. Start paying attention to how much caffeine you are getting from foods and beverages. It may be more than you think. Read labels carefully. Even then, your estimate may be a little low because not all foods list caffeine.

Cut Back. Do it gradually. For example, drink one less can of soda or drink a smaller cup of coffee each day. This will help your body get used to the lower levels of caffeine and thereby lessen the withdrawal effects.

Go decaf. Most decaffeinated beverages look and taste the same as their caffeinated counterparts.

Make it quick or herbal. When making tea, brew it for less time. This cuts down on its caffeine content. Or choose herbal teas, which don't contain the stimulant.

Check the bottle. Some over-the-counter pain relievers contain caffeine as much as 130mg of caffeine in one dose.

Be mindful when indulging in caffeinated beverages, food, and over the counter medications.

Continued~ **Top 5 Foods to Lower Your Numbers**

- ◆ Mackerel
- ◆ Lake Trout
- ◆ Herring
- ◆ Sardines
- ◆ Albacore Tuna
- ◆ Salmon
- ◆ Halibut

You should bake or grill the fish to avoid adding unhealthy fats. If you don't like fish, you can also get small amounts of omega-3-fatty acids from foods like ground flaxseed or canola oil. You can take an omega-3 or fish oil supplement to get some of the benefits, but you won't get other nutrients in fish, like selenium. If you decide to take a supplement, just remember to watch your diet and eat lean meat or vegetables in place of fish.

🍏 Walnuts, almonds and other nuts can reduce blood cholesterol.

Nuts are rich in polyunsaturated fatty acids, walnuts also help keep blood vessels healthy. According to the Food and Drug Administration, eating about a handful 1.5 ounces a day of most nuts, such as almonds, hazelnuts, peanuts, pecans, some pine nuts, pistachio nuts and walnuts, may reduce your risk of heart disease. Just make sure the nuts you eat are not salted

or coated with sugar. All nuts are high in calories, so a handful will do. To avoid eating too many nuts and gaining weight, replace foods high in saturated fat with nuts. For example, instead of using cheese, meat or croutons in your salad, add a handful of walnuts or almonds.

Olive oil, contains a potent mix of antioxidants that can lower your "bad" (LDL) cholesterol but leave your "good" (HDL) cholesterol untouched. The Food and Drug Administration recommends using about 2 tablespoons (23 grams) of olive oil a day in place of other fats in your diet to get its heart-healthy benefits. To add olive oil to your diet, you can sauté vegetables in it, add it to a marinade, or mix it with vinegar as a salad dressing. Olive oil is high in calories, so don't eat more than the recommended amount. Keep in mind that "light" olive oils usually more processed than extra-virgin or virgin olive oils and are lighter in color, not fat or calories.

🍏 Foods with added plant sterols or stanols.

Foods are now available that have been fortified with sterols or stanols, (substances

found in plants that help block the absorption of cholesterol). Margarines, orange juice and yogurt drinks with added plant sterols can help reduce LDL cholesterol by more than 10 percent. The amount of daily plant sterols needed for results is at least 2 grams-which equals about two 8 ounce servings of plant sterol-fortified orange juice a day.

🍏 Other changes to your diet.

For these foods to provide their benefit, you may need to make other changes to your diet and lifestyle. Cut back on cholesterol and total fat, especially saturated and trans-fat that you eat. Saturated fats, like those in meat, full-fat dairy products and some oils, could raise your total cholesterol.

**" HDL is good
cholesterol
and LDL
is bad
cholesterol"**