

News and information for those attending the monthly Vegetarian Cooking Classes at the Central Coast Adventist School or other Health Programs sponsored by the Erina Seventh-day Adventist Church

## Are Supplements Risky?

Supplements are worth more than \$26.9 billion to the US economy. But new research suggests taking high doses of certain supplements could actually do more harm than good.

### Calcium

Accumulating evidence suggests that calcium supplements, widely used to prevent and treat osteoporosis (despite generally disappointing results on fracture rates), may actually increase the risk of heart attack and stroke. High doses of calcium are also a risk factor for kidney stones. On the other hand, calcium intake via a high calcium diet helps to lower blood pressure and may cut the risk of colorectal cancer.



Food sources include dairy products (but calcium is not well assimilated from dairy) and fortified alternatives, tofu made with calcium sulphate, nuts, seeds, dried fruit, legumes and Asian greens.

### Vitamin E

A major antioxidant in the body, vitamin E supplements are used in the hope of preventing cancer and cardiovascular disease. However, high doses may increase the risk of cancer, heart failure and early death. A trial of more than 35,000 healthy men found that the risk of prostate cancer increased by 17 per cent in those who took a daily dose of 400 international units (IU) of vitamin E.

But getting this vitamin from

foods is not harmful. Frequent use of nuts, for example, is consistently associated with fewer heart attacks. Food sources include nuts, seeds and vegetable oils like sunflower.

### Folic acid

Because it has been shown to reduce the risk of neural tube defects in babies, folic acid fortification of food has become common. Yet concerns exist about supplementing everyone with this vitamin. High doses appear to increase colon polyps (a precursor to cancer) and are linked directly with cancers of the breast, prostate and colon. Folic acid supplements can also mask vitamin B12 deficiency. However, naturally folate-rich foods protect against chronic diseases.

Food sources include green leafy vegetables, legumes, fruits such as oranges and strawberries, and juices.

Supplements are not magic bullets. Either too little or too much of a nutrient can be harmful, particularly if it is taken in an isolated form. The safest way to guard against ill health is to base your diet on a diverse range of nutrient-rich foods.

## This Month

### Building Healthy Bones



Our next class will be on **Monday April 29** starting at **6:45 pm**. As the title above says, Marcia Townend, nutritionist, will talk about how to build and maintain healthy bones and prevent osteoporosis. Is the answer just eating lots of dairy products or is there more to it?

### This Month's Menu

Once again you will be cooking healthy vegetarian dishes that also taste delicious. Here are some recipes that may be on the menu.



-  Tomato, Borlotti Bean and Rocket Salad
-  Apple Cinnamon Breakfast Quinoa
-  Chilli Green Pea Soup
-  Italian Tofu Balls
-  Apple and Rhubarb with Oat Clusters

### Bookings

Bookings are essential so that we can buy the right amount of ingredients. Please email or ring Cheryl on 0403 848242. The cost is \$15 payable on the night.

## This Month's Recipe Eat Beans to Prevent Diabetes

### Tofu Patties with Thai Salsa

- ¼ cup vegetable oil
- 1 red onion, finely chopped
- 400g can cannellini beans, rinsed and drained
- 300g firm tofu, drained
- 400g wholemeal bread
- ¼ cup fresh mint leaves
- ¼ cup fresh coriander leaves
- 2 Tbsp vegetarian oyster sauce or stir-fry sauce
- 1 egg lightly beaten
- 1 garlic clove

1. In a large non-stick frypan heat 2 Tbsp oil and sauté onion for 1-2 minutes until tender. Cool.
2. In a processor or blender, place beans, tofu, bread, herbs, marinade, eggs and garlic. Process until smooth. Stir in onion and season to taste.
3. Heat remaining oil in same pan. Place egg rings into pan. Spoon tofu mixture into egg rings. Cook on medium heat 2-3 minutes each side until firm and golden. Drain on paper towel. Repeat with remaining mixture.

#### Thai salsa

- 1 lebanese cucumber, finely sliced lengthwise
- 2 Tbsp chopped coriander
- 2 Tbsp lime juice
- 1 small red chilli, finely chopped (or 1 tsp sweet chilli sauce)
- 1 tsp brown sugar

Combine all ingredients in a small bowl, tossing well. Serve patties with the salsa and extra sauce if desired.

**Tip:** These tofu patties can also be serve as a burger filling. Serve on a hamburger roll topped with salsa and salad leaves.

*Beans, beans, the magical fruit.*

You might remember these words from a children's song. And there might be some truth to the silly rhyme.

Eating beans can help you reduce your risk for type 2 diabetes and manage blood sugar levels if you already have it. (And yes, they can cause their fair share of abdominal gas. More on that.)

Researchers recently looked at 41 studies related to blood sugar levels, beans and legumes. They found that people who ate more beans had lower blood sugar levels. Beans also helped lower insulin levels, which reduced the risk for diabetes. It's an important finding when an estimated 26 million people in the United States already have type 2 diabetes. And another 70 million have prediabetes. Diabetes can lead to poor circulation, kidney failure, blindness, strokes, and heart disease.

All it took to effectively manage blood sugar levels was a half-cup of beans a day. Chickpeas (garbanzos) had the biggest effect on lowering blood sugar levels. Soybeans, peas, and lentils also helped.



Here are some simple ways to add more legumes to your diet:

- \*Use soymilk on cereal or and in baking.
- \*Order bean soup on the menu, or make your own.
- \*Make a peanut butter sandwich.
- \*Try an entrée made with tofu at a restaurant.
- \*Choose trail mix with peanuts.
- \*Put hummus dip on whole-wheat crackers.
- \*Add garbanzos or other beans to your salad at a salad bar.

To help relieve bloating and gas from eating beans, cook thoroughly, or use a pressure cooker. Rinsing beans thoroughly after soaking also helps. And give yourself some time to adjust your diet. Start with tofu (see recipe on the left) and soymilk. Your body will eventually adapt to eating more legumes.

### 'Sugar Free' May Increase Diabetes

A recent *American Journal of Clinical Nutrition* study examined the lifestyle of 66,000 French women and suggests artificially sweetened sodas may increase the risk of Type 2 diabetes for women, compared to sodas sweetened with ordinary sugar.

Compared with juice drinkers, women who drank either of the sodas had a higher incidence of diabetes.

The highest incidence occurred among women who consumed only diet sodas.

Previous research has shown aspartame (a common artificial sweetener) has a similar effect on blood glucose and insulin levels to the sucrose in sugar.