UNEXPECTED NUTRITION RESEARCH FINDINGS TO MAKE HEALTHY EATING EASIER

New research presented at the 2014 Experimental Biology conference offers surprisingly simple strategies for weight loss and overall health.

OMAHA, Neb., April 30, 2014 —ConAgra Foods, Inc., (NYSE: CAG), one of North America’s leading food makers, is presenting findings from nutrition studies and hosting a session at the 2014 Experimental Biology conference around topics ranging from weight management to heart health. The research headlines are—

- Single serve frozen meals were more effective at helping study participants cut calories and stay full throughout the day than weight loss shakes.
- Heart health benefits were associated with consuming the MyPlate recommended amount of tomatoes.
- A special scientific session on sodium intake and health outcomes continues to question the benefit of reducing sodium intake to meet current sodium intake recommendations.

The Real Meal Solution to Cutting Calories: Single Serve Frozen Meals at Lunch Yield Greater 24-Hour Energy Intake Reduction Compared to Shakes

Replacing typical meals with meal replacement shakes is a long-standing, effective option for those seeking to lose weight. When researchers compared replacing a typical lunch with either a single serve frozen meal or an equal calorie portion of a shake, unexpectedly, the single serve frozen meal led to greater daily calorie reduction than the shake. The greater benefit for reduced calories with the single serve frozen meal might have been related to less hunger. Study participants who replaced a typical lunch with a single-serve frozen meal were less hungry three hours after eating than when they replaced their lunch with a meal replacement shake.

Both the single serve frozen meal and the shake helped people eat fewer daily calories than usual. Although participants could eat as much as desired, they didn’t make up for fewer calories at lunch by eating more at subsequent meals and snacks, thus preserving the lunch calorie reduction. This finding suggests that replacing even one meal a day supports daily calorie reduction.

“The results from this study are exciting because they show that replacing a typical lunch meal with a frozen single-serve meal offers a low-effort way to eat less,” says Kristin Reimers, PhD, RD, Nutrition Director, ConAgra Foods. “While meal replacement shakes have been effective in helping people lose weight, they exemplify “dieting” and lack the traditional meal experience. An unrecognized characteristic of most single-serve frozen meals is that they contain fewer calories than self-selected meals. Even those single-serve frozen meals that are not promoted for weight loss usually contain fewer than 450 calories.”

Promote Heart Health with Just Two Servings of Tomatoes Each Day: Relationship of the Tomato Intake Amount Recommended in MyPlate to Cardiovascular Disease Risk Reduction

- The United States Department of Agriculture’s (USDA) Choose MyPlate recommends eating more tomatoes than ever because of their nutritional benefits. New research reveals that the simple act of eating two servings of tomatoes each day may be as heart healthy as it is delicious. And for individuals who have very little tomato in their diet, it’s especially heart healthy to add tomatoes.
- Researchers found that people who added canned tomatoes, sauce or paste in the approximate amount recommended by MyPlate (about two 1/2 cup servings) to their usual diet for six weeks had increased lycopene levels in their body. When similar lycopene levels were observed in large population-based studies, the greater lycopene levels were related to decreased risk of heart disease and stroke.
- Tomatoes are included in the red and orange vegetable group, and MyPlate recommends eating almost one cup (0.8 cups) daily of red and orange vegetables, mostly from tomatoes.

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Sodium: Too much, too little or just right? Scientific Session on Sodium Intake and Health Outcomes
During a diet revamp, people often focus on things to reduce, such as sodium. As part of a special session on sodium, nutrition and health experts examined the science to date regarding sodium intake. Surprisingly, the latest research does not support sodium intake reduction to current recommendations of 1,500 mg or even 2,300mg.

In fact, the lowest risk for heart disease observed in a recently published study[1] was associated with sodium intakes similar to average American sodium intakes.

Additionally, new epidemiological evidence shows that sodium intake has been consistent across populations and geographies for decades, suggesting that sodium intake is resistant to change over time regardless of food supply and environmental, cultural and demographic differences.

“Nutrition science is a constant work in progress to develop guidelines that are the most beneficial for health,” states Reimers. “Newly published science is bringing to light that reducing sodium intake to the currently recommended levels may not be helpful, and may even be harmful for some people. While the sodium science evolves, it’s important to remember that heart health is much broader than sodium intake and is supported by a number of dietary and lifestyle factors, including maintaining a healthy weight; consuming a diet rich in fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and dairy products; avoiding excessive saturated and trans fats; maintaining a physically active lifestyle; moderating alcohol consumption and avoiding tobacco products.”

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Abstracts are also published in the FASEB Journal:

- http://www.fasebj.org/content/28/1_Supplement/630.1.abstract?sid=cc44a500-0973-45f9-9047-6953bbf6b3cd
- http://www.fasebj.org/content/28/1_Supplement/LB306.abstract?sid=cc44a500-0973-45f9-9047-6953bbf6b3cd


ABOUT CONAGRA FOODS

ConAgra Foods Inc. (NYSE: CAG) is one of North America's largest packaged food companies with branded and private branded food found in 99 percent of America's households, as well as a strong commercial foods business serving restaurants and foodservice operations globally. Consumers can find recognized brands such as Banquet®, Chef Boyardee®, Egg Beaters®, Healthy Choice®, Hebrew National®, Hunt’s®, Marie Callender’s®, Orville Redenbacher’s®, PAM®, Peter Pan®, Reddi-wip®, Slim Jims®, Snack Pack® and many other ConAgra Foods brands, along with food sold by ConAgra Foods under private brand labels, in grocery, convenience, mass merchandise, club and drug stores. Additionally, ConAgra Foods supplies frozen potato and sweet potato products as well as other vegetable, spice, bakery and grain products to commercial and foodservice customers. ConAgra Foods operates ReadySetEat.com, an interactive recipe website that provides consumers with easy dinner recipes and more. For more information, please visit us at www.conagrafoods.com.

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