

Osteoarthritis Symptoms Improved by Glycine

Supplementing the diet with the amino acid glycine helps to prevent osteoarthritis, and could be used to treat physical injuries or other conditions related to structural weakness such as osteoporosis, a recent study has revealed.*

Spanish researchers from Tenerife and Granada studied the effect of glycine supplementation in 600 subjects between the ages of 4 and 85 years with osteoarthritis, osteoporosis, or physical injuries. Participants were given 5 grams glycine in the morning and 5 grams in the evening. In all cases, symptoms significantly improved.

Osteoarthritis or arthrosis is the most common osteoarthritic condition, which occurs when cartilage degenerates until bone is exposed, resulting in significant pain and impaired mobility. Although the disease is often treated with non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs, there is presently no cure.

Although glycine is classified as a non-essential amino acid, meaning that it is not necessary to obtain by dietary means, the team's research indicated that it should be considered essential as the body has limited capacity to synthesize glycine. They concluded that glycine leads to a general improvement in osteoarthritis and similar conditions over time, often between two weeks and four months.

—Dayna Dye

* Available at: www.medicalnewstoday.com/articles/79021.php. Accessed August 10, 2007.

Broccoli and Cauliflower Reduce Aggressive Prostate Cancer Risk

A diet rich in cruciferous vegetables, particularly broccoli and cauliflower, may be associated with a lower risk of aggressive prostate cancer, a new study reports.*

Previous research has shown that this family of vegetables, which also includes cabbage, kale, and Brussels sprouts, protects against colon, breast, prostate, thyroid, cervical, and other cancers, and slows disease progression.

In this study, Canadian researchers analyzed dietary questionnaires from 29,361 men participating in the Prostate, Lung, Colorectal and Ovarian Cancer Screening Trial, including 1,338 men with prostate cancer, of whom 520 had aggressive disease.

Evaluation of questionnaire responses after an average follow-up of 4.2 years revealed that a higher intake of broccoli and cauliflower had a particularly strong protective association against aggressive disease, which is associated with a poor prognosis.

Men who ate more than one serving of broccoli a week had a 45% lower risk of aggressive disease compared with those whose intake was less than once a month. Cauliflower had an even greater benefit, with a 52% risk reduction in men who consumed the vegetable more than once a week. The researchers also noted a possible benefit in cancer risk reduction from consuming spinach.



—Dayna Dye

* Kirsh VA, Peters U, Mayne ST, et al. Prospective study of fruit and vegetable intake and risk of prostate cancer. *J Natl Cancer Inst.* 2007 Aug 1;99(15):1200-9.

Low Testosterone May Signal High Metabolic Syndrome Risk

Age-related decline in the male sex hormone, testosterone, may increase men's risk for metabolic syndrome, a collection of risk factors strongly associated with diabetes and heart disease, according to a recent report.*

Researchers in Taiwan studied nearly 400 men with an average age of about 79 years, looking for relationships between testosterone levels and indicators of metabolic syndrome. Low total testosterone levels were correlated with a high body mass index and elevated values for the following health parameters: body fat, blood sugar, insulin, glycosylated hemoglobin (HbA1c, a long-term indicator of high blood sugar), and high sensitivity C-reactive protein (a marker for ongoing inflammation).

The researchers concluded: "Low total testosterone may be a significant indicator for development of metabolic syndrome in elderly men."

—Dale Kiefer

* Tang YJ, Lee WJ, Chen YT, Liu PH, Lee MC, Sheu WH. Serum testosterone level and related metabolic factors in men over 70 years old. *J Endocrinol Invest.* 2007 Jun;30(6):451-8.

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