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Motherhood, Breast-Feeding May Affect Long–Term Weight

How many children a woman bears and whether or not she breast-feeds them may affect her weight decades later, according to new research.

Childbearing is linked with an increased risk of obesity, but breast-feeding cuts that risk by about 1 percent for every six months of nursing.

Women who are in their childbearing years can take from our and other research that breast-feeding is good for them and their children and that the benefits for their own health may be extremely long-lasting.

While the reduction in body mass index (BMI) associated with breast-feeding is small for individual women, it is substantial in terms of obesity-related diseases across the population. BMI is measurement of body size based on height and weight.

The study doesn’t prove that breast-feeding will make you slimmer; it merely shows an association between the two. However, the link held even when the researchers took into account smoking, physical activity and other factors that can affect weight.

Researchers have several hypotheses about why breast-feeding helps control weight over the long term. One is the so-called “rest” hypothesis. It says that breast-feeding “may be involved in re-setting various metabolic control centers in the brain after childbirth”.

For women who have not yet given birth, the study suggests that it’s important to consider breast-feeding and ask your doctor how much weight you should gain.

Source: http://health.yahoo.net/

8 Surprising Heart-Healthy Foods

Five dollar foot-long: good for the heart? Well, kind of. Earlier this summer the American Heart Association put its stamp of approval on certain Subway meals. Crowing the sub shop the first fast-food chain to don the “Heart–check” logo on its menu.

While the whole menu isn’t a fair game, some of your favorite sandwiches like the black forest ham, oven roasted chicken, and subway club on 9-grain bread-at 6 inches-meet the American Heart Association’s standards for amounts of sodium, cholesterol, saturated fat, and trans fat. (What to drop pounds eating delicious restaurants fare? Pick up Eat This, Not That! 2012 today.) Shocked? Healthy foods don’t have to mean boring oatmeal and dry salmon.

Spicy Foods
Heartburn or heart protector? What’s up? Capsaicinoids appears to block the gene that causes your arteries to contract, leading to relaxed muscles and better blood flow to the heart, researchers believe. Your move: don’t go overboard with Mexican. Instead, spice up a salad with half chili pepper, or a tablespoon of chili flakes a day.

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8 Surprising Heart-Healthy Foods (continued)

**Beer**
Red wine may soon have company on the healthy drinks menu. Drinking a little more than a pint of beer a day could make you 30 percent less likely than non-drinkers to suffer from a stroke, heart attacks, and heart disease, researchers found. Credit heart benefits to the alcohol itself, and antioxidants in beer.

**Burgers**
As long as they’re grass-fed. How come? A heart-healthy diet has to be balanced in omega-3 and omega-6 fatty acids. The omega-3 to omega-6 fatty acid ratio is usually way out of whack on most of your conventional beef, but with grass-fed beef, it’s close to 1:3—similar to the ratio found in most heart-healthy fish. Grass-fed beef is loaded with cardio-protective vitamin. Check out your local farmer’s market.

**Pasta**
The antioxidants in pasta help control inflammation and insulin, which in turn helps reduce levels of harmful LDL cholesterol and triglycerides. When Harvard University analyzed the diets of more than 27,000 people over 8 years, they discovered that those who ate whole grains daily weighed 2.5 pounds less than those who ate refined grains.

**Scrambled Eggs**
A study in the Journal of Nutrition found that eating eggs increased HDL (‘good’) cholesterol but not LDL (‘bad’) cholesterol. So eggs actually help your arteries stay clear! In another study, overweight participants ate a 340-calories breakfast of either two eggs or a bagel 5 days a week for 8 weeks. Those who ate eggs (including the yolk) reported higher energy levels and lost 65 percent more weight - with no effect on their total cholesterol levels.

**Steak**
Yes, it’s true: Even beef can give bad cholesterol a gut-punch, says a study published in the American Journal of Clinical Nutrition. Study participants ate portion of 4.0 and 5.4 ounces of lean beef daily, and saw decreases in “bad” LDL cholesterol of up to 10 percent when combined with healthy diet.

What gives? Previous studies that found red meat increases heart disease risk one bog flaw: They lump processed meats (sausage, hot dogs, spam) in a category with red meat. These are completely different from lean beef in terms of nutrition.

**Drumsticks**
The extra fat in dark turkey or chicken meat raises your levels of cholecystokinin (CCK), a hormone that makes you feel fuller, longer. You’ll be less likely to overeat in the hours that follow your meal. What about your cholesterol? Only a third of the fat in a turkey drumstick is the saturated kind. (The other two-thirds are heart-healthy unsaturated fats.) What’s more, 86 percent of that saturated fat either has no impact on cholesterol, or raises HDL (“good”) cholesterol more than LDL (“dad”) cholesterol---a result that actually lowers your heart-disease risk.

**Ketchup**
There are two things you need to know about tomatoes: red are the best, because they’re packed with more of the antioxidant lycopene; and processed tomatoes are just as potent as fresh ones, because it’s easier for the body to absorb the lycopene. Studies show that a diet rich in lycopene can decrease your risk of coronary artery disease. It took people just one glass of tomato juice and 2 tablespoons of ketchup every day for 3 weeks to cut LDL cholesterol levels by an average of 8.5 percent, according to a study in the British Journal of Nutrition.

Source: http://health.yahoo.net/
7 Easy Ways to Add Years to Your Life

**Skip the Soup, order a salad**
Italian research found that eating as little as 1 cup of raw vegetables daily can add 2 years to your life. Why raw? Cooking can deplete up to 30 percent of the antioxidants in vegetables. To eat your quota, fill a zip lock sandwich bag with chopped red and green peppers, broccoli, and carrots. Toss the bag into your briefcase, along with a packet of dressing—the fat will boost your body’s absorption of certain nutrients.

**Stop Drinking Sugar**
Sugar-laden drinks are killing you. New Research in Circulation links men’s sugary drink consumption to an increased risk of heart attack. Meanwhile, Scientists at Loma University found that men who consume five 8-ounce glasses of water each day are 54 percent less likely to suffer a fatal heart attack than those who drink just two glasses or less every day. Hmm…

**Crack Open Some Nuts**
When Loma Linda University researchers tracked the lifestyle habits of 34,000 Seventh-Day Adventists—a population famous for its longevity—they discovered that those who munched nuts 5 days a week earned an extra 2.9 years on the planet.

**Cut Calories the Easy Way** – Just eat in moderation!

**Explore Your Environment**
A 2011 study in Transportation found that increased availability of bike lanes means more people bike to work.

Not every city is known for its bike lanes, but most are building initiatives to keep their communities in shape: hiking programs in the mountains, kayaking on large lakes, or webs of running trails.

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**Phone a Friend Regularly**
In a study of seventy-somethings, Australian researchers found that those with the largest network of friends had the longest lease on life. For the average guy, this could add up to 7 additional years of existence.

Try to learn a few new faces at work, trade lifting tips at the gym, or simple say “hey” to that neighbor you’re never met. You’ll have many years together to thank each other.

**Above All, Remember That There’s Life After Retirement**
In Yale University study of older adults, people with a positive outlook on the aging process lived more than 7 years longer than those who felt doomed to deteriorating mental and physical health.

Already envisioning decades of decrepitude? Volunteer for a cause you’re passionate about: Selfless actions can put a positive spin on life and distract from unhealthy obsessing, report a study in Psychosomatic Medicine.

(Source: [http://health.yahoo.net/](http://health.yahoo.net/))

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**TEXAS NEWS**

**A STATEWIDE ECONOMIC IMPERATIVE: LINKING ADULT EDUCATION WITH POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION**

By one estimate, at least 60% of jobs in Texas will require career certificate or college degree by 2010. Yet, many indicators suggest that the state of Texas is not well positioned to meet this demand: over 3.8 million Texans (23.7% of the population) qualify for adult education services; 6.5 million Texans (or 38.6% of the population) speak a language other than English at home, and the state ranks near the bottom in the percentage of adults over 25 with a high school diploma.

(Source: The Chronicle)
The American Medical Association says starting in 2011, the country’s 78 million baby boomers, born between 1946 and 1964, will start turning 65 years old at the rate of 3 to 4 million a year. Since they are relaxing activities, hobbies are An article on the AMA website says: “The statistics are staggering. By age 65, around two-thirds of all seniors have at least one chronic disease and see seven physicians. Twenty percent of those older than 65 have five or more chronic diseases see 14 physicians – and average 40 doctor visits a year. Situations like these are a nightmare for patients and the physician who treat them. Variations in therapies, medications and even differing instructions can be confusing, conflicting and hard for patients to remember.

The IOM recommendations through the Department of Health and Human Services, which sponsored the report, makes sure its agencies take responsibility for building the mental health/substance use workforce for the Older Adult Mental Health Targeted Capacity Expansion Grant program to the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration.

Source: WebMd.com