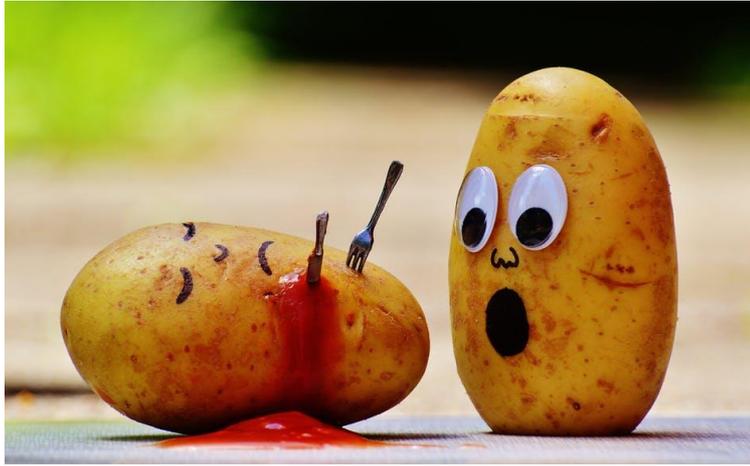


Cutting Carbs - The Key To Your Longevity



by Julie O'Connell Seamer

The connection between eating a low-carbohydrate diet and longevity is becoming stronger, if we believe the latest research in ageing.

According to American experts, including Dr Michael Eades - pioneer in metabolic medicine and co-author of 'Protein Power', sugar is more damaging to the body than fat. "Low fat is the flat-earth theory of human nutrition", he says, advising to reduce dietary carbohydrates and replace them with protein and high quality fats to lower insulin levels and promote health, happiness and longevity.

The theory behind this is that the key to longevity is in keeping the insulin pathway in balance. This ensures that your body's sugar levels are maintained within a tightly regulated range.

When we over-eat refined carbohydrates such as table sugar and white flour, our metabolism quickly converts them into the simple sugar called glucose. This prompts the pancreas to over-produce insulin, designed to carry glucose into the cells.

In this sense, sugar is toxic to the cells, and after years of insulin and glucose overload, the cells can become insulin resistant. Thus, they will no longer respond to even optimally high quantities of insulin. The result is sky-rocketing blood sugar levels, as the pancreas is tempted to secrete even more insulin in a futile attempt to maintain normal blood-glucose levels. At this point you may develop diabetes and/or greatly increase your risk of a multitude of other life-threatening health problems (such as coronary heart disease, hypertension, diabetes and polycystic ovarian syndrome).

High carbohydrate diets are of concern because they produce high insulin levels and prevent your body from burning fat. Medical studies have shown that most overweight people (as many as 75%) suffer from insulin resistance, which negatively impacts their ageing process. It because a vicious cycle.

When you control insulin through a low or reduced carb eating regimen, you greatly increase the odds of controlling your weight. Moreover, maintaining balanced insulin states is an anti-ageing strategy because it will reduce susceptibility to illness.

Dr Eades adds "it makes sense that a low-carb diet will make you live longer". He points to recent discoveries that ageing is due to a cumulative effect of free-radical damage and that lower-carb diets, which keep insulin levels low, can reduce free-radical escape and cumulative damage. He recommended sticking with lean protein sources such as fish, soy, poultry and lean red meats at each meal. Also consumer fibrous crispy vegetables and fruit, and limit portion sizes of starchy vegetables, beans and legumes.

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Research data consistently shows three common factors in people who are mentally and physically fit and live to be 100 years old. The first is low triglycerides, the second is high levels of high-density lipoprotein (HDL - the good cholesterol) and the third is low levels of fasting insulin. A low carbohydrate diet improves all of these variables.

The good news to take from all this is that longevity isn't only influenced by genetic factors - it's also very much related to diet and lifestyle - giving us the power to make changes now, to extend and optimise our life.