[IMAGE]

Avoid the IRS!

Nobody is suggesting you shouldn’t pay your taxes. The IRS discussed here is "insulin resistance syndrome" - a condition that increases a person’s odds for heart disease and possibly diabetes and some forms of cancer. IRS occurs when the body demonstrates a reduced ability to control the processing of blood sugar. It can be caused by a combination of factors, including obesity, smoking, excessive levels of the hormone insulin, and a diet low in dairy foods.

In this study of cardiovascular disease risk factors in four U.S. cities, published in the *Journal of the American Medical Association*, researchers analyzed four-week diet questionnaires from over 3,000 individuals. Researchers focused on the amount of dairy products people ate, such as milk and sour cream.

In overweight individuals, the risk for developing IRS was almost 75% less in those with the highest dairy consumption (over 35 times per week) compared to the lowest (less than 10 times per week). Each additional occasion of dairy consumption per day was linked to a 21% decrease in risk for insulin resistance. Also, the odds for IRS were 4-5 times higher in overweight individuals than healthy subjects. In individuals with healthy weight levels, dairy consumption did not significantly affect insulin resistance.

The high levels of calcium, potassium, and magnesium found in dairy products may be responsible for their potential to reduce risks for type-2 diabetes and heart disease. When selecting dairy foods, seek out those with reduced fat content, and remember that one of the keys to good nutrition is incorporating a wide variety of foods in your diet, so don’t each too much of any type of food.

Reference:

Pereira MA, Jacobs DR, Van Horn L, et al. Dairy consumption, obesity, and the insulin resistance syndrome in young adults: The CARDIA study. *Journal of the American Medical Association* 2002:287(16), pp. 2081-2089.

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