

[IMAGE]

Dairy Foods May Ward off Metabolic Syndrome

The American Heart Association estimates that more than 50 million Americans suffer from metabolic syndrome. Not everyone agrees on what "metabolic syndrome" is, but many experts agree that having a combination of disorders such as high blood pressure, excess abdominal fat, and elevated levels of blood glucose and triglycerides, puts a person at increased risk of the disease. Previous research has suggested that eating dairy foods may help prevent weight gain. A new study goes one step further by suggesting the more dairy products a person consumes, the less likely that person is to develop metabolic syndrome.

Researchers in this study analyzed the dietary habits of 827 adults in Iran, looking specifically at their daily consumption of dairy products such as milk, yogurt and cheese. They also conducted waist and blood pressure measurements to see how many of them met different risk factors for metabolic syndrome.

People in the highest quartile (25 percent) of dairy intake were 31 percent less likely to meet the study's definition of metabolic syndrome compared to people with the lowest level of dairy consumption. They also were 37 percent less likely to have a large waist circumference, and 29 percent less likely to suffer from hypertension.

The researchers believe that the high calcium content in milk, cheese and yogurt may have accounted for the decreased risk of metabolic syndrome. Other good sources of calcium include eggs, sardines, tofu, and green, leafy vegetables. For more information on ways to reduce the risk of metabolic syndrome, visit www.chiroweb.com/find/archives/general/wellness/index.html.

Azadbakht L, Mirmiran P, Esmailzadeh A, et al. Dairy consumption is inversely associated with the prevalence of the metabolic syndrome in Tehranian adults. *American Journal of Clinical Nutrition*, September 2005;82(3):523-530.

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