

CHEMICAL CONTAMINANTS

Arsenic Found in Chicken



Chicken often contains dangerous amounts of arsenic, according to a new report. Researchers from the Institute of Agriculture and Trade Policy tested for arsenic in 151 samples of raw chicken from supermarkets and 90 samples of cooked chicken from 10 different well-known fast-food restaurants. Arsenic is a known carcinogen and is linked to neurological, cardiovascular, and immune problems. It is commonly added to chicken feed to improve feed efficiency, improve pigmentation, promote faster weight gain, or prevent intestinal infection caused by parasites.

The study found that 55 percent of uncooked chicken products contained detectable arsenic, and 100 percent of the fast-food brands had detectable levels of the toxic element. The arsenic content varied, although many samples were well above the Environmental Protection Agency's 10 parts per billion standard allowable in public drinking water.

Institute for Agriculture and Trade Policy. *Playing Chicken: Avoiding Arsenic in Your Meat*. Minneapolis, Minnesota: Institute for Agriculture and Trade Policy 2006.

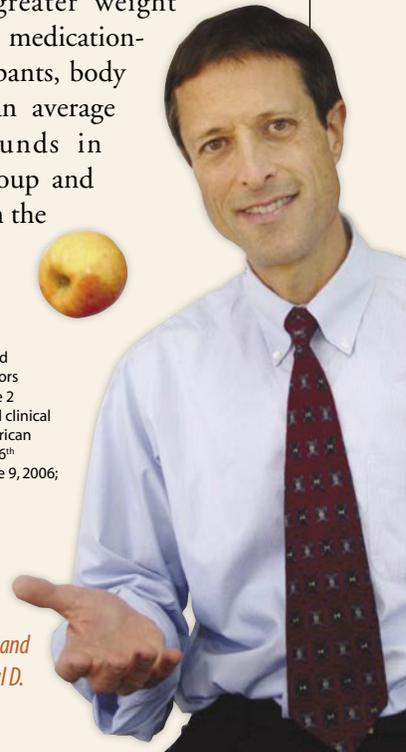
DIABETES

Vegan Diet for Diabetes

A new study presented at the American Diabetes Association's (ADA) annual scientific conference in Washington, D.C., suggests that people with type 2 diabetes improve significantly with a low-fat, plant-based diet. In a controlled trial, conducted by investigators from PCRM, the George Washington University, and the University of Toronto, 99 participants were randomly assigned to follow either a low-fat, vegan diet or a more standard ADA diet. ADA guidelines allow for all food types but in limited quantities. Many participants were able to reduce their medication in the course of the study. Among participants whose medications stayed constant, the vegan diet improved patients' hemoglobin A1c, the main indicator of long-term blood glucose control, by an average reduction of 1.2 points, a drop significantly greater than the effect of most diabetes drugs and three times greater than experienced by those following the ADA diet.

Other benefits for the vegan group were greater reductions in low density lipoprotein (LDL, or "bad") cholesterol levels and greater weight loss. Among medication-stable participants, body weight fell an average of 14.3 pounds in the vegan group and 6.8 pounds in the ADA group.

Barnard ND, Cohen J, Jenkins D, Turner-McGrievy G. Effect of a plant-based diet on glycemic control and cardiovascular risk factors in individuals with type 2 diabetes: a randomized clinical trial. Presented at: American Diabetes Association 66th Scientific Sessions; June 9, 2006; Washington, D.C.



Diabetes researcher and PCRM president Neal D. Barnard, M.D.

Obesity Fuels Diabetes



A new study confirms the role of obesity in diabetes risk. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention compiled national health survey data from

1997 to 2003 to examine trends in the incidence of diagnosed diabetes among U.S. adults. Of those with diabetes in 2003, 89 percent were overweight or obese (30 percent and 59 percent, respectively). The total increase in diagnosed diabetes was 41 percent.

While this study did not distinguish between type 1 (formerly called "childhood-onset") diabetes and type 2 ("adult-onset") diabetes, type 2 accounts for 90 percent to 95 percent of all diabetes cases. Because type 2 diabetes often relates to body weight, a change in diet and lifestyle can reduce the risk of the disease and aid in its treatment.

Geiss LS, Pan L, Cadwell B, Gregg EW, Benjamin SM, Engelgau MM. Changes in incidence of diabetes in U.S. adults, 1997-2003. *Am J Prev Med.* 2006;30:371-377.

© ISTOCKPHOTO

TOM KOCHHEL

© ISTOCKPHOTO

Copyright of *Good Medicine* is the property of Physicians Committee for Responsible Medicine and its content may not be copied or emailed to multiple sites or posted to a listserv without the copyright holder's express written permission. However, users may print, download, or email articles for individual use.