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Who knew that eating fruits and vegetables could be good for you?

(Well of course NIWH did!)

By Icramer

A recent Reuters news report discussed research by the National Heart and Lung Institute of London that shows a "Mediterranean" diet, where children consumed two servings of veggies a day and some fruit every day could reduce allergy symptoms. While children in the study (from the rural Crete areas in Greece) still had skin allergies, their allergic rhinitis (sneezing, runny nose, wheezing) was reduced depending on what they ate.

Intake of grapes, oranges, apples, and fresh tomatoes protected against wheeze and nasal allergies, and a high intake of nuts reduced the likelihood of wheezing, Cullinan and associates found.

The hypothesis is that a diet high in foods rich in antioxidants can protect from allergic symptoms.

But, it is important to note that they ate whole foods! Food supplements containing antioxidants have not always displayed the same effects that the natural foods contain. In fact, the American Heart Association just conducted a series of tests that showed that supplements had no effect on preventing heart disease and in some cases may be detrimental to health. In most cases, the organizations recommend that you actually EAT THE FOOD that contains the good stuff, instead of simply trying to take it as a pill.

Additionally, the original study indicated that children who ate high amounts of margarine had an INCREASED risk of rhinitis. This makes complete sense. All the data indicate that food high in trans-fats (and margarine is nothing but trans-fats in a wrapper) are considered a huge source of health disasters. It has been reported that consumption of trans-fats lower good cholesterol and raise bad cholesterol. Also

Harvard nutritionist Walter Willett blames trans fats for at least 30,000 premature deaths a year, calling their introduction in the 1940s the "biggest food-processing disaster in U.S. history."

Take home message? Eat what your grandparents ate. Fruit, veggies and a little olive oil are fabulous things. I even eat real butter. Stay away from processed foods containing trans-fats. And remember, all fast foods that are deep fried (unless they have specifically stated that they are trans-fat free like Wendy's) are full of trans-fats. So, eating more healthily is good for you. Imagine that.