

Folate Reduces Alzheimer's Risk

Researchers at Columbia University Medical Center in New York have recently demonstrated that higher folate intake is associated with a remarkably decreased risk of Alzheimer's disease (AD). The study, published in the January 2007 issue of the journal *Archives of Neurology*¹ included a random sampling of 965 non-demented Medicare recipients aged 65 years or older living in Manhattan.

Evaluation of these individuals included an in depth neuropsychological assessment as well as an evaluation of total dietary and supplemental intake of folate, an important B vitamin. The initial examination occurred between 1992 and 1994. Further assessments were made every 18 months for a period of approximately 6.5 years.

The results of the study revealed that those subjects consuming the highest levels of folate, including both from food and a supplement, had a risk of AD 50% lower than the subjects with the lowest consumption of this nutrient. The authors concluded that the likely reason folate consumption was associated with this profound reduction of Alzheimer's risk is that folate helps lower homocysteine, and amino acid which profoundly increases Alzheimer's risk.

So the take home message is: adding folate rich foods including green beans, leek, parsnip, cabbage, green peas, spinach, cauliflower, chick peas, oranges, peanuts, oats, whole grain bread, and taking a folate supplement are important parts of an Alzheimer's risk reduction program along with having your doctor check your homocysteine level with a simple blood test. Strive to keep your homocysteine level at 9 or below.

¹Jose A. Luchsinger., et al., Relation of Higher folate Intake to Lower Risk of Alzheimer Disease in the Elderly. *Arch Neurol.* 2007; 64:86-92.

400 mcg of Folic acid a day is the RDA. Standard Process has a product called Folic Acid B₁₂ that has 400 mcg per tablet. Recommended dosage is 1-2 per day. Cost \$9.00 for 90 tablets.

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