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New research out of Japan reports an inverse association between a diet rich in B-vitamins and risk of death from cardiovascular disease.

DIETS HIGH IN B-VITAMINS REDUCE RISK OF DEATH FROM CARDIOVASCULAR DISEASE

Begun in 1988, the Japan Collaborative Cohort Study (JCCS) examined the dietary patterns of 130,000 Japanese adults over nearly ten years. Analyses continue to be performed on the enormous dataset generated by this long-term, large-scale study.

In the latest JCCS analysis (published in the journal *Stroke* in April 2010), researchers compiled information on dietary levels of folate, vitamin B6, and vitamin B12 as reported in JCCS food frequency questionnaires. They then examined possible correlations between dietary intake of these nutrients and risk of death from common cardiovascular diseases. Data from 23,119 men and 35,611 women (age 40-79 years) met the study criteria, making this one of the largest sample sizes to date for this type of analysis.

Based on the available data, dietary folate and vitamin B6 intakes were inversely associated with mortality from heart failure for men. (Inverse association means that higher dietary levels of folate and vitamin B6 are connected with lower risk of disease.) For women, folate and vitamin B6 intakes were inversely associated with mortality from stroke and coronary heart disease, as well as total cardiovascular disease incidence. Interestingly, these associations remained statistically significant even after adjusting for common cardiovascular disease factors. A statistically significant association could not be determined for vitamin B12 intake and risk of death from cardiovascular disease.

This large-scale collaborative study from Japanese researchers correlates with similar results from the National Health and Nutrition Examination Surveys (NHANES) performed in the United States, further confirming the benefits of a diet high in certain B-vitamins.

Cui R, Iso H, Date C, Kikuchi S, Tamakoshi A, the Japan Collaborative Cohort Study Group. Dietary Folate and Vitamin B6 and B12 Intake in Relation to Mortality from Cardiovascular Diseases - Japan Collaborative Cohort Study. 2010. Stroke, ePub ahead of print, doi: 10.1161/STROKEAHA.110.578906.