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cod liver oil...

NATURE'S SUPERFOOD by Steven Acuff, Nutritionist

> A GROWING NUMBER OF health-conscious people are discovering the unique benefits of nutrient-dense cod liver oil. Modern processing has made it possible to produce pleasant-tasting oil that has little in common with the rancid, smelly oil of old. Today it is preserved with vitamin E and comes in citrus and other flavours. It should be stored cold. The cod liver oil sold in Australian health food shops goes through a filtration process to take out any toxins. The notorious heavy metal, mercury, is water-soluble and gathers in the flesh of fish rather than in the liver. This dangerous environmental toxin has made more and more people wary of fish as a source of the now famous omega 3 essential fatty acids. Cod liver oil is a whole food with these EFAs as well as vitamin A and D that many people lack with the unhealthy eating habits of today. These nutrients are more beneficial when they are taken together in a natural food rather than as isolated substances.

There is a widespread deficiency of vitamin D in Australia as people stay out of the sun to avoid getting skin cancer. It is best to get plenty of sun exposure before and after the peak UV hours. Anyone living in this sun-baked land can get enough vitamin D during the sunnier half of the year, since sunlight triggers vitamin D formation in the skin. Queenslanders get lots of sunshine all year round to make enough vitamin D, but Victorians and Tasmanians generally need cod liver oil from April to the end of October. Vitamin D regulates the absorption of calcium and keeps bones strong, while a lack of it weakens the bones and leads to osteoporosis. This is far more important in the current epidemic of osteoporosis than getting too little calcium, as is generally thought. Ironically, osteoporosis is worst in countries with the highest calcium intake. Cod liver oil has a higher concentration of vitamin A and D than any other food. For centuries northern Europeans have taken cod liver oil to compensate for the lack of sunlight and thrive in their cool, dark climate. In the modern world this insight has got lost.

Vitamin A supports eyesight, the health of the skin and the lining of the digestive tract. Skin and intestinal problems do not heal well without adequate vitamin A. It also plays a key role in the proper utilisation of protein. Many people

mistakenly believe that beta-carotene in plant food supplies vitamin A. However, beta-carotene is only a precursor of real vitamin A and the conversion to vitamin A is rarely optimal. Overdoing physical exercise, drinking a lot of alcohol, eating a lot of polyunsaturated oil, taking several kinds of medication and having a zinc deficiency can all hinder the conversion of beta-carotene to vitamin A. We can trust cod liver oil to give us enough real vitamin A for all-round health.

Cod liver oil is also rich in the omega 3 fatty acids, DHA and EPA, that support especially the central nervous system and help to overcome hyperactivity in children.

Everyone over the age of three may need cod liver oil. Pregnant and breast-feeding women can better their children's intelligence by taking cod liver oil. The brain consists of about 60 percent fat and

DHA makes up a substantial part of this fat.

Many take fish oil to get the essential fatty acids, but they miss vitamin A or D. Cod liver oil goes beyond fish oil with both the omega 3 fatty acids and the fat-soluble vitamins A and D. The kind of omega 3 in flaxseed oil, ALA, is not the same and must be converted to EPA and DHA. However, the body cannot convert much ALA, so it is wiser to take fish oil to get the needed omega 3.

Fish oil and cod liver oil help to fight and prevent many illnesses, including heart disease, cancer, diabetes, ulcers, arthritis, depression and Alzheimer's. They also help prevent colds and the flu. Fish oil and cod liver oil give great support to pregnant women to make the pre and post-natal time problem-free. They also raise energy levels as well as concentration and memory.

Cod liver oil has something for everyone, especially now in this cool time of the year. So take it daily and enjoy its many benefits. Children generally need only half the dose that adults take. The dosage varies, depending on how concentrated the product is. So follow the recommendation on the label.



FOR MORE INFORMATION...

www.westonaprice.org/basicnutrition/codliveroil

MISO

> MISO IS A NATURALLY fermented food made from cooked soybeans and either cooked rice, barley, wheat, buckwheat, whole rice or white rice etc. that has been impregnated with the organism *Aspergillus oryzae*. This is called Koji. Sea salt and spring water are added during a long fermentation process in wooden vats. Miso is high in protein, including all the essential amino acids and calcium. The enzymes and bacteria in it help proper digestion. Miso is also a source of Vitamin B12 and is an important supplement for vegetarians and vegans.

There are early references to a type of miso in Chinese literature. However, the first reference to soybeans used as a protein source was in 500AD by which time Buddhism was encouraging a meatless diet and the monks developed a process of salt pickling and fermentation. Some scholars maintain that miso originated from Northern Japan, where ancient homemade miso traditions are still in practice. The miso is allowed to age in cedar vats for 18 months to three years by the same process of enzymatic fermentation that has been used for centuries. Miso like Shoyu (soy sauce) tamari (wheat free soy sauce), sake and rice vinegar are made by using the culture *Aspergillus oryzae*.

The different types of miso are:

1 Hacho Miso:

This is a soybean miso made from soybean koji. Hacho is a very dry miso and is the thickest in texture of the misos. It goes well with the darker heavier root and winter vegetables. It is an excellent base for miso soups or it can be mixed with other kinds of miso.

2 Mugi Miso:

This means barley miso and is made with barley koji. It is suitable for both summer and winter cooking and is probably the most popular due to its pleasing aroma and delicious taste.

3 Kome Miso:

This means rice and in most cases "white rice". Kome is the sweetest of the misos with Shiro (white) miso being the sweetest of all. Shiro is wonderful for seasoning creamy cauliflower soups or for use in salad dressings, sauces and spreads.

4 Genmai Miso:

Genmai means brown rice. Although traditionally white rice is used to make nearly all rice misos, modern demands for whole grain rice make for a milder lighter tasting miso.

There are two types of miso – pasteurised and unpasteurised, the latter having more of the beneficial organisms. Never boil miso, add it at the end to season soups or at the table for the greatest nutritional benefit.

FOR MORE INFORMATION...

Practically Macrobiotic by Keith Mitchell
www.clearsprings.co.uk/japanese/miso

MISO SOUP

This makes for a nourishing and sustaining breakfast that will keep you going for hours.

1 teaspoon miso (either unpasteurised barley or genmai miso)

1 teaspoon umeboshi puree (umeboshi plums alkalise the body and add a kick to this soup)

2 tablespoons of organic brown rice (soaked overnight and cooked in morning)

½ bukchoy

either steamed cauliflower, roasted pumpkin or roasted beetroot

1 egg – made into an omelette

Coconut oil

METHOD:

1. Soak one cup of organic brown rice overnight in water. Drain the next morning and cook by absorption method.

2. Keep some steamed or roasted vegetables from previous night's dinner – or wilt some bukchoy or chinese cabbage leaves in a little water in the morning.

3. Saute 2 tablespoons per person of cooked brown rice in a little coconut oil.

4. Mix the teaspoon of miso with the teaspoon of umeboshi puree in each soup bowl and pour over one cup of water just boiled from the kettle.

5. Add sautéed rice, mashed or chopped up vegetables and stir through.

6. Garnish with egg omelette cut into slivers.

Eat for breakfast or lunch – substituting brown rice with lentils or adzuki beans.

Remember, all grains and legumes must be soaked in water for several hours before cooking to remove the phytic acid. Better digestion is achieved through this and they cook much quicker.

