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MEDIA RELEASE

GLOBAL HEALTH, CHANGING PERSPECTIVES
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NUTRITION BITES

Scented 'Fat Patches' as Effective as Slimming Drugs?

Invented by a reformed chocolate addict, vanilla scented 'fat patches', stuck on the back of the hand can perform as well as some of the new slimming drugs, but without the side effects, according to a recent scientific trial.

Researcher Catherine Collins, Chief Dietitian at St George's Hospital, London comments "the aroma patch significantly reduced sweet food intake, and there was greater weight loss amongst those using the vanilla patch, compared to a lemon-scented dummy patch or no patch." Catherine Collins suggests that the patches would be most effective in helping people who are slightly overweight, and have difficulty in controlling their intake of sweet foods.

The Future of Hospital Food – a memorable culinary experience

Imagine being in hospital, with a restaurant menu, ordering your meal at a time when you're hungry (rather than at set mealtimes), even dining with your family. Could this be the future of patient food?

According to Dick Huiras, of Huiras and Associates Employee/Management Development Training, Houston, Texas "patient feeding is moving toward aligning itself with the same experience the patient would get when dining out. Taking patient feeding from a covered domed tray to an experience you would receive in a fine restaurant is an option patients have in today's modern hospital food service departments."

Meanwhile, back in Britain, Rick Wilson, Director of Nutrition and Dietetics at King's College Hospital, London is actively involved at local and national level to help improve and innovate hospital food. He comments "delivery of food passed the patient's lips is a joint effort principally by nurses, food service personnel and dietitians. If any one of these groups is not fulfilling it's role then it is quite likely that food service will fail to nourish the patient. The excitement of presentation is a key element in creating the right environment on the ward to stimulate and encourage eating. Poorly presented food, drab surroundings or distractions such as bad smells, will diminish the enjoyment of a meal and reduce the likelihood of adequate nourishment."

Osteoporosis – an unrecognised complication of coeliac disease

Up to 50 percent of people with coeliac disease (an intolerance to gluten in wheat, barley, rye and possibly oats and thought to affect at least 1 in 300 people) may have osteoporosis. Failure to diagnose osteoporosis can lead to much unnecessary pain and suffering and also has large financial repercussions for the Health Service.

Fiona Steven , Chief Dietitian at the Western Infirmary in Glasgow, and contributor to a recent report on osteoporosis and coeliac disease comments "dietitians, health professionals and the public need to be aware that people with coeliac disease have a greater incidence of osteoporosis than the general UK population. People with coeliac disease and diagnosed osteoporosis need to keep permanently to a calcium-rich, gluten-free diet. They may also need additional long-term treatment to reduce fracture risk."

When Fruit is Not Enough

Fruit may be a great snack but it doesn't hit the spot for women with pre-menstrual syndrome (PMS). Eighty eight Australian women who suffer with PMS recorded what they ate for four days before and after their menstrual period, revealing that they ate more frequently, and ate more overall before their period. In fact they had more from all major food groups, except for fruit and beverages. Sweet foods showed the most marked increase.

GB Cross, Children's Health Development Foundation, 8th Floor Samuel Way Building, Women's and Children's Hospital, 72 King William Road, North Adelaide, South Australia.

Prime-Time TV Promotes Poor Nutrition

Viewers of television programmes developed in the US are bombarded with nutrition and health messages, yet only 25% of the messages were judged to be positive, recommended behaviours.

A sample of 26 prime-time television programmes was analysed in this US study and the results reveal that a substantial portion of the nutrition and health messages promote unhealthy habits. The authors conclude that television must be recognised as a major source of health and nutrition information, and an influence on health practices.

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