

Pre-Pregnancy Diet May Permanently Affect A Child's Genes

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Dental Focus

Holistic Dentistry for Total Health



A mother's diet prior to conception can have life-long effects on her child's health.

Most pregnant women are very cautious with their food during pregnancy and overall very protective of their bodies. They are well aware that during pregnancy everything they do has an impact on their child. Some women spend months planning and preparing for pregnancy while others get pregnant unexpectedly. In either situation, most women are not aware that their per-pregnancy diet is just as important as their diet during their pregnancy. Studies are showing that a mother's diet before pregnancy could permanently affect how her child's genes function.

A child's genes are directly inherited from his/her parents. Genes are part of chromosomes which are long strands of a chemical substance called DNA. In other words, genes are made up of DNA. Parents pass on traits or characteristics such as hair and eye color to their children through their genes. However, the behavior of these genes does not only depend on DNA sequence, but epigenetic factors which includes any factor responsible for gene activity. Let's examine this further.

Most of us have been taught that our genes are a fixed blueprint of our lives and if disease runs in the family that we are destined to have the same disease. While scientists used to believe that DNA is the sole determinant for our health and who we are, research shows that we have control of how our genes express themselves. For example, eating a healthy diet can turn on disease-fighting genes while smoking cigarettes can turn off cancer-fighting genes. This science is known as epigenetics.



**FROM OUR
KITCHEN
TO YOURS**



**Cucumber
Avocado Soup**

SO REFRESHING!

A genome (an entire set of genes) is the set of instructions for your cells and has a cellular material on top and outside, called epigenome. The epigenome marks the genome to perform specific tasks. Therefore, our markers can turn on and off our genes. These markers can be influenced by environmental and lifestyle factors such as our diet, exercise, sleep, stress, toxins in the environment, and prenatal nutrition. Epigenetic marks can be inherited. This means that we have control over not only our genes and health, but the genes and health of future generations.

Although pregnancy can be unexpected, when there is a plan, it must include a healthy diet beginning months before conception. The important message to take away is that we continue to see what an important role nutrition plays in our lives. Whether planning to get pregnant or not, eating right must be a priority. Our choices today are not only impacting our lives, but the lives of our children. It's not all up to our genes!



Sunscreen: Hot or Not ?

It's summertime! Time to get outside and enjoy the weather. Unfortunately, in today's environment, summertime is highly associated with sunscreen. We are constantly advised to use sunscreen before we even step foot out of our homes. There is even sunscreen in most of our lotions and makeup.

How are we supposed to get the best source of vitamin D if we are always hiding from it? After all, vitamin D is critical for good health and disease prevention including preventing certain cancers.

Despite being advised to wear sunscreen all the time and reduce sun exposure, skin cancer rates have been rising. We are told to use sunscreen to prevent skin damage and skin cancer, but can we blame only the sun? Let's think about this.

Did you know that our bodies have natural sun protection? The body is actually designed to handle the stresses of everyday living.

Perhaps we have reduced our natural sun protection by eating more processed foods and less antioxidant rich foods.

So what are we actually supposed to do? Here are a few tips for this summer:

Avoid staying in the sun too long and burning but make sure to get some sun exposure every day. It is a good idea to get out in the sun for approximately 20 minutes a day with no sunscreen. Of course, try to stay out of the sun during its peak hours - between 10 AM to 4 PM.

1 cucumber
1 avocado
2 stalks celery
3 Tbsp lemon juice
1/2 cup water
1 tsp sea salt

Blend all ingredients and enjoy!

Serve chilled.

Cucumber Fact:

Cucumbers can help protect your skin from sun damage because they contain antioxidants like Vitamin C.

Have A Great Summer!

Boost your internal sunscreen.

Did you know that eating foods high in antioxidants increases your skin's natural UV protection? Also, protect your body by eating plenty of leafy greens and lots of foods rich in Omega 3's.

Choose a sunscreen carefully.

There are many sunscreens that have toxic ingredients that are linked to cancer and that do not provide the proper protection. Consider making your own sunblock for every day use. Coconut oil is a great natural alternative.



Daily Movement

Now that the weather is finally improving we can get outside and move! If you listen to your body you will know that we are certainly not meant to be sitting around for extended periods of time. Our bodies are constantly communicating with us and we usually listen. When we are hungry we eat and when we are tired we sleep. What do we do when we start feeling heavy, stiff, and sluggish? Move!

Here are three tips for staying physically active:

1. ***Be Aware of Your Body*** - Recognize that your body needs movement. Pay attention to how your body feels every day and really listen to what it is trying to tell you.
2. ***Make a Commitment*** - Set goals, stay focused and hold yourself accountable. How do you hold yourself accountable? Write your goals down each day and before bed check in to see what you've accomplished.
3. ***Doing Something is Better than Doing Nothing*** - If you don't have 30 minutes a day, don't give up! You can take 5 minutes. Take a short walk, run up and down the stairs, whatever works for you, but do something!

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