

# Breakthrough medical food reverses risk of heart disease and diabetes

May 19 2011

---

Researchers at the University of Florida and Metagenics Inc. today announced that a program consisting of a breakthrough medical food combined with a low-glycemic, Mediterranean-style diet is almost twice as effective as one of the best diets alone for lowering risk factors for cardiovascular disease, the leading cause of death in the U.S.

In addition, the medical food UltraMeal® PLUS 360° is 40 percent more likely to resolve metabolic syndrome, a condition affecting one-third of all American adults that increases the risk for [heart disease](#) and diabetes. Researchers believe that patients who incorporate the medical food into their diets as well as make necessary life style changes can improve their health faster than by using a Mediterranean diet alone.

The results of the multicenter clinical trial are published in the May/June issue of the *Journal of Clinical Lipidology*, a publication of the National Lipid Association.

"[Chronic illness](#) is draining our healthcare resources and keeping millions of people from enjoying healthy, vibrant lives. Many of these illnesses are the result of long-term lifestyle and behavior choices," said Robert H. Lerman, M.D., Ph.D., director of medicine and extramural clinical research for Metagenics Inc. "This study is important because it shows how effective UltraMeal® PLUS 360° is in resolving metabolic syndrome and cardiovascular risk factors in affected individuals, and identifies a powerful new approach to combating chronic illness."

Metabolic syndrome is a cluster of conditions that increase an individual's risk for developing heart disease, diabetes, and other chronic illnesses. As more countries adopt Western dietary habits and sedentary lifestyles, the number of chronic illnesses such as type II diabetes, obesity, heart disease, arthritis and autoimmune diseases has increased.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) in the U.S., chronic illness affects nearly half of all adults and contributes to seven out of 10 deaths. Even more alarming, chronic illness costs Americans more than \$1.5 trillion annually in direct medical costs. It is for these reasons researchers and others in the medical profession believe that re-focusing medical practice treatments on the provision of lifestyle therapy will not only significantly improve the health status of most Americans, but will reduce costs.

"Preventing chronic illness is far more effective from both a cost and treatment perspective than treating the illness once it develops," said Lerman. "Physicians have evidence-based research that now enables them to actually use lifestyle therapy in their patients to help them avoid chronic illness by treating the cause, not just the symptoms of these conditions."

The clinical trial, which was conducted at three universities including the University of Connecticut-Storrs, the University of Florida-Jacksonville, and the University of California-Irvine, consisted of 89 women between the ages of 20 and 75. To be eligible for the study, they had to have a LDL -C of more than 2.59 mmol/L (100 mg/dL), TG equal to or greater than 1.70 mmol/L (150 mg/dL), and meet two of the four remaining criteria for metabolic syndrome. These requirements are based on standards set forth in the National Cholesterol Education Program Expert Panel on Detection, Evaluation, and Treatment of High Blood Cholesterol in Adults – Adult Treatment Panel III (NCEP-ATPIII) criteria. Participants with heart, liver or kidney disease or who were

using blood sugar or cholesterol-lowering agents were excluded. Those with type II diabetes were not excluded.

"It's very important for physicians to learn about these new findings. Doctors have not been trained to take a therapeutic lifestyle approach with patients who have [metabolic syndrome](#)," said Mark S. McIntosh, M.D., one of the principal researchers who is the Director of Corporate Wellness and Assistant Professor in the Department of Emergency Medicine at the University of Florida – Jacksonville. "Programs like Metagenics' FirstLine Therapy® are needed to provide the tools and support for physicians to change the way they practice and to help patients make real lifestyle changes."

Both doctors believe that this research underscores the importance of nutrigenomics, the science of how nutrition impacts genetic expression and its potential to improve health and avoid chronic illness.

"Patients who incorporate the medical food along with lifestyle therapy get healthier quickly and safely," Lerman said.

"Most physicians are accustomed to prescribing drugs for people with lifestyle-related conditions, even though the first line recommended course of treatment is lifestyle therapy," said Wayne Dysinger, M.D., current president of the American College of Lifestyle Medicine and chair of the Department of Preventive Medicine at Loma Linda University in Loma Linda, California. "This study reminds physicians that the option of prescribing food, in this case a medical food, should be considered. It demonstrates the ability of medical foods to reduce risk factors and improve health. The study results are a valuable addition to research on the impact of nutrition on health."

Provided by Scott Public Relations

Citation: Breakthrough medical food reverses risk of heart disease and diabetes (2011, May 19) retrieved 20 March 2024 from <https://medicalxpress.com/news/2011-05-breakthrough-medical-food-reverses-heart.html>

This document is subject to copyright. Apart from any fair dealing for the purpose of private study or research, no part may be reproduced without the written permission. The content is provided for information purposes only.