



## | FRESH FINDINGS |

## Foods for Super Sperm

With fertility treatments on the rise, it's natural to wonder if eating certain foods can boost one's baby-making odds. And, in fact, recent studies have revealed that two out of three of the following foods may enhance a man's virility. Can you pick which ones?



## A. SOY B. FISH C. FRUITS AND VEGETABLES

**ANSWER: B & C.** The omega-3 fat DHA (docosahexaenoic acid), found in oily fish, may help improve sperm quality, suggests a study in the *Journal of Lipid Research*. Researchers found that mice with low levels of DHA "produced a low sperm count (10 percent of the norm) and these sperm have an abnormal shape that doesn't move," says author Manabu T. Nakamura, D.V.M., Ph.D. But supplementing their diets with DHA reversed these abnormalities. It's still too early to make recommendations for how much omega-3s men should aim to get, says Nakamura, but any amount is likely to be helpful. Another study, in the journal *Fertility and Sterility*, linked consuming more of certain nutrients found in fruits and vegetables, including folate, vitamin C and lycopene, with healthier sperm counts. The researchers speculate that it's the antioxidants that improve sperm quality. Get more information, including how soy and soda affect virility, at [eatingwell.com/golfertility](http://eatingwell.com/golfertility).  
—Ana Mantica



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## Can Kids Blame Pesticides for ADHD?

Organophosphate pesticides—commonly used on fruits and vegetables (and also for indoor pest control)—could increase the risk of attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) in children, according to a new study in the journal *Pediatrics*. Using urine samples, researchers tested more than 1,100 children for breakdown products of organophosphate pesticides and found that those with the highest levels of dimethyl thiophosphate (the most common compound) were twice as likely to have ADHD as children with nearly undetectable levels.

"Because this was an observational study, we can't say that exposure to organophosphates *causes* ADHD," says study co-author Marc Weisskopf, Ph.D., Sc.D., of Harvard School of Public Health. But the possibility is plausible given that organophosphates target the nervous system (they kill insects by disrupting their brains and nervous systems) and past research has linked organophosphates with hyperactivity and cognitive defects in laboratory animals. While this study doesn't definitively link organophosphates to ADHD, says Weisskopf, he recommends washing fruits and vegetables well to remove some of the pesticide residues, and buying organic.  
—Amy Paturel, M.S., M.P.H.



Find a list of produce with the highest pesticide residues at [eatingwell.com/go/dirtydozen](http://eatingwell.com/go/dirtydozen).

## | ASK OUR NUTRITIONIST |



## Does eating red meat increase a woman's risk of breast cancer?

—L. Zaner, Chicago, IL

A few studies do suggest that too much red meat or processed meats (e.g., bacon, cold cuts) could increase risk of breast cancer.

In a study of 35,372 British women, eating as little as 2 ounces of red meat or 1 ounce of processed meats per day was associated with increased risk of breast cancer, though the effect was greater for postmenopausal women. In another study of just premenopausal women, eating 3 ounces or more of red meat daily raised risk of hormone receptor-positive breast cancer (a specific type of breast cancer that needs estrogen to grow).

One explanation for the link: heterocyclic amines (HCAs), which form when meat is cooked at high heat. HCAs can act like estrogen, which may spur the growth of tumors. HCAs are produced when poultry is cooked, too, but research has yet to link poultry with breast cancer. Red meat is also high in easily absorbable heme iron, which some scientists think interacts with estrogen to promote tumor development.

**BOTTOM LINE:** The association between red meat and breast cancer is still tentative. Research linking red meat and processed meats with colorectal cancer is much more established, however. To reduce risk for cancers overall, the American Institute of Cancer Research recommends avoiding processed meat and eating no more than 18 ounces of red meat per week.

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