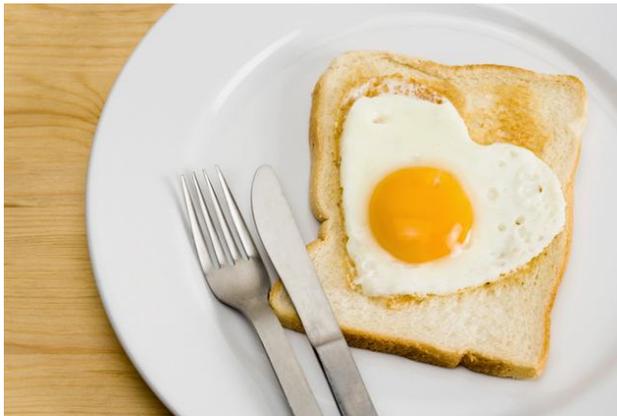


NUTRITION DEBATE: ARE EGGS GOOD FOR YOU?



Mar 16, 2012 | By Mike Roussell

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In the world of nutrition, few debates have remained as heated as the great egg debate. For nearly 40 years, researchers have tried to determine whether your omelets, scrambled eggs and frittatas are actually healthy. The argument against has always revolved around two simple factors -- eggs are high in fat and cholesterol. So it'd be easy to assume that removing the yolk or avoiding eggs altogether are part of any get back in shape diet plan. But a closer look at the research reveals that the real debate about eggs is why there was any question

about their health benefits. In fact, a quick look at the most common myths shows that making eggs a standard part of your diet is one of the best decisions you can make.

MYTH: EGGS MAKE YOU FAT

TRUTH: EGGS ARE A GREAT FOOD FOR WEIGHT LOSS

You may have heard that eating eggs will make you fat because 60 percent of the calories in eggs come from fat. However, eating fat doesn't make you fat and eggs are a calorie-controlled food designed to maximize weight loss, not prevent it. One egg is only about 70 calories, with a great balance of 6 grams of protein and 5 grams of fat. The protein/fat combination of increases satiety hormones -- the ones that tell your brain you are full. The protein in eggs also causes your body to release the hormone glucagon, which encourages your body to release and use stored carbohydrates and fat.

To prove the point, compare eggs to rice cakes—a timeless “diet” food. Two rice cakes also contain 70 calories, but with no protein or fat. Those calories come from 14 grams of high glycemic, fat-cell stuffing, refined carbohydrates, which makes it a much less desirable choice.

MYTH: EGGS RAISE YOUR CHOLESTEROL

TRUTH: EGGS DON'T AFFECT CHOLESTEROL LEVELS

Reducing blood cholesterol levels has been a major public health mission for decades. It would make complete sense that if you wanted to decrease the amount of cholesterol in your bloodstream then you should reduce the amount of cholesterol you are eating. That's why eggs have typically been touted as dangerous, as they contain approximately 200 mg per serving.

The problem: Dietary cholesterol doesn't actually raise cholesterol as much as you might think. In fact, only 30 percent of people experience significant increases in cholesterol levels after following a diet high in cholesterol. Researchers from Harvard looked at the dietary habits of more than 100,000 people and concluded that daily egg consumption in healthy individuals didn't increase risk of coronary heart disease. What's more, a study from the University of Connecticut found that eating three eggs per day as part of a low carbohydrate regimen improved HDL -- the "good" cholesterol -- without any negative health effects.

MYTH: YOU SHOULD ONLY EAT EGG WHITES

TRUTH: ENJOY THE ENTIRE EGG -- YOLK INCLUDED)

The "egg white only" movement was created out of the mass movement to remove as much cholesterol and fat from the American diet to fight heart disease and obesity. An egg white contains all protein -- 3.5 grams per egg; the rest of the nutrients, protein and fat are hiding in the yolk, which means the yellow is the most nutritious part. Egg yolks contain 240mg of leucine, the amino acid single-handedly responsible for flipping your genetic muscle-building switch .

But egg yolks are much more than just a muscle building nutrient. They also include choline -- essential for cell membrane function -- cholesterol, which serves as the molecular framework for multiple hormones in the body, vitamin A , vitamin D and vitamin E. You can also get eggs that come from chickens that were fed omega-3 rich feed, the omega-3s in their feed enriches the omega-3 fats in the yolk, giving you as much as also contain 150mg of the long chain omega-3 fat DHA . Enjoy the entire egg to take advantage of all the nutritional benefits

MYTH: EATING RAW EGGS ALLOWS YOU ACCESS TO MORE NUTRIENTS

TRUTH: COOK YOUR EGGS TO ENSURE YOU ACCESS ALL THE NUTRIENTS

Ever since Rocky chugged down raw eggs as part of his quest to beat Apollo Creed, the lore about eating raw eggs has appealed to nutrition fanatics. However, research shows that the only thing you'll gain from your Italian Stallion style of eating is a list of health concerns -- without the benefits. One touted benefit of raw eggs is that you'll digest cholesterol in its unoxidized form. However, the oxidation of egg cholesterol during cooking is minimal -- and reduced even further if you cook your eggs at a lower temperature. Eating raw eggs has also been recommended to prevent the degradation of health-promoting lutein and zeaxanthin. However, research from the "American Journal of Clinical Nutrition" and "Journal of Nutrition" shows that eating cooked eggs leads to increases in blood lutein and zeaxanthin levels.

On the flip side, raw eggs contain a compound called avidin, which binds and prevents the absorption of the essential nutrient biotin. Cooking eggs deactivates avidin, rendering it biochemically useless. And while only 1 in 10,000 eggs is contaminated with salmonella, properly cooking eggs will effectively kill any salmonella that is present—as well as significantly reduce the risk of any food-borne illness that might exist.