

■ RESEARCH

You say tomato...

Is there nothing the humble tomato can't do? Not satisfied with being a good source of vitamin C and great for your skin, the little red fruit is now tackling cancer.

Touted as a 'super superfood' for its ability to reduce the risk of prostate cancer, the Moruno tomato has twice the normal levels of a natural cancer-fighting substance and as much vitamin C as a similar-sized orange.

The Moruno, which took Spanish scientists two years to develop and is the result of cross-breeding 2,000 varieties, has double levels of lycopene, which gives tomatoes their red colour, and which scientists have linked to a reduced risk of prostate cancer.

Lycopene is more easily absorbed into the bloodstream when the tomatoes are cooked with certain oils, such as olive oil.

In a recent study, more than 1,000 men with prostate cancer had their post-diagnosis diets examined. Patients who had tomato sauce more than twice a week had a 44 per cent lower risk of the disease spreading.

The cancer is less likely to spread when patients ate large amounts of

tomatoes and oily fish, according to American researchers. Ashleigh McWilliams, a tomato buyer for a US supermarket says: 'Tomatoes are already considered superfoods because they have so many health giving qualities. However, the Moruno, because of its very high lycopene and vitamin C levels, may actually qualify as being the first super superfood.'

She adds: "Tomatoes have naturally high levels of lycopene, but this naturally-bred variety has double the level of standard ones.

"But besides its exceptional nutritional content, the Moruno tastes great and has thick, juicy flesh. And, gram for gram, it has as much vitamin C as an orange."

Recently, scientists unveiled a tomato which is said to stay fresh for 45 days – three times longer than the conventional version.

Researchers 'turned off' the genes linked to the production of ripening enzymes. The researchers believe the same process could be applied to other fruits, but the need for extensive safety testing means it will be years before the GM fruits go on sale in supermarkets, if ever.

– The Evening Standard



■ CHARITY

Show you care

Dubai expat Natalie Carney has been travelling to Afghanistan regularly to offer assistance to local orphanages throughout the country. As part of her continued fund-raising efforts to provide support for these children, she has launched a calendar for 2010. It may be February, but you can do your bit by buying or distributing these calendars in your community. The calendars are being sold at Dh40 each;



all proceeds will go towards a financial aid fund for the orphanages. If you would like to buy one or can help distribute them among friends and colleagues, e-mail Forgottenvictimsaafghanistan@yahoo.com. Every calendar sold will contribute to making a difference in an Afghan child's life.
* Watch out for the upcoming *Friday Making a Difference* feature on Natalie.

Natalie Carney (centre) with a group of Afghan girls during one of her visits

WELL BEING

Wear with care

The body comes with a wide array of damage protection mechanisms, pain being the most obvious one. If something hurts, then it is probably causing damage and should be stopped. Yet surveys have shown that 42 per cent of women will happily endure pain in order to wear killer heels.

Heels cause many foot problems – in addition to restricting, they also massively increase the weight pressing down on the restricted areas, pushing the toes with enormous force into a small wedge shape. Here's how to minimise high-heel damage:

■ Make sure your heels are properly fitted. If your feet slide to the front, leaving a gap behind your heel, the shoes don't fit. Look for narrow heels with a snug but not tight fit; your toes should not be squished into the bottom of the shoe.

■ Avoid very thin heels. Thicker heels increase stability and distribute the weight on your foot more evenly.

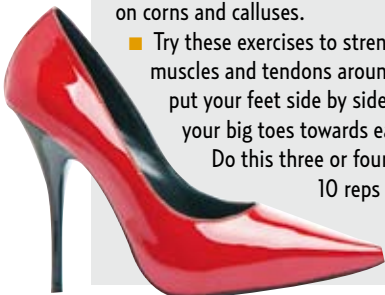
■ Avoid heels with a straight drop down from the heel to the toe. Go for a gentler slope.

■ Invest in silicone metatarsal pads, to act as shock absorbers.

■ Wear open-toe high heels to relieve pressure on corns and calluses.

■ Try these exercises to strengthen the muscles and tendons around your big toe: put your feet side by side and try to move your big toes towards each other. Do this three or four times a day, 10 reps each time.

– The Evening Standard



PARENTING



I WILL NEVER FORGET...

The hug that changed my life

Sooner or later, everyone realises that they have a special path to follow. That path can be determined by a personal decision to change or it can be steered by an unexpected turn of events in the course of life. For Kasturi Sunkara, it was the latter.

Sunkara, who holds a Master's Degree in Human Resources Management, owned a health club in Andhra Pradesh (on the southeastern coast of India) in 1981. Yoga was a part of the health club's programme.

"I taught yoga free of charge. It was encouraging to receive positive feedback from my students about this exercise regimen, but then again, I was offering classes for free!"

In 1991, an accidental fall down the stairs resulted in Sunkara sustaining severe injuries. The mother of a three-year-old daughter, Adhira, was left with a fracture in the back and a paralysed left leg.

"I had two surgeries on my back," says Sunkara. "The second surgery was a failure as it caused complications in my right leg." She was advised to

sit down only if absolutely necessary. "I used to eat either lying down or standing up."

Alternative therapies didn't offer much relief, says Sunkara, who was on a course of painkillers and other medication. Soon her internal organs started to suffer as a result of the heavy medication and she was no longer able to move around freely. Sunkara had no choice but to shut the doors of her health club.

"However, I refused to be completely inactive," she says. "Somehow, I managed to recover enough to continue my yoga classes, which we held in my home. I am sure I found the strength as a result of the encouragement I received from my husband as well as from students attending the classes. They gave me the moral support I needed. The classes continued with the help of a student who used to demonstrate the postures for me following my oral instructions.

"After almost two years of pain and more surgeries, I started mustering

■ "We have a 7-year-old and a 4-year-old, and we remind them before we open presents to think about which ones they really want before they take an item out of its original packaging," says mom Caitly Anast.

"Then we have them choose one to (donate) to children who are less fortunate. We also tell them we have to make room for their new toys, which means we have to get rid of some old ones. We put those in the garage sale pile and let them keep the money when they sell their toys."

Expert advice: While pre-emptive downsizing makes sense in theory, holiday commitments have a way of eating up those extra few moments required to declutter. That's why Danielle Claro, *Real Simple* magazine's home editor, suggests using

the "frenzy of holiday anticipation" to your advantage.

"If kids know they're making room for new stuff, they can be a lot more generous with what they'll get rid of," says Claro, speaking from experience. "You have to really play up what's coming."

Claro suggests gathering the brood, providing some snacks and tackling the toy boxes.

"I've always found it to be a fairly festive activity," she says. "It's fun, it's reminiscent, and you can even get younger kids involved: 'Test these markers to see if they're dried out.'" Throw away the stuff that's no longer usable and donate the things that are in good condition but no longer close to kids' hearts. If your children are too young to grasp the

moment for me. I started researching the techniques and philosophies of yoga and my condition continued to improve. I started feeling the impact of the exercises in strengthening my body. I also found inner peace. It took me almost six years to walk normally again, but I did it.

"My husband was my major source of strength and he helped me tremendously. Whenever I began to give up, he would encourage me to carry on working at it."

Sunkara can be contacted at kasturisunkara@yahoo.co.in

– Preethi Janice D'Sa is a Dubai-based freelancer



Sunkara, who sustained injuries after a fall, is today able to practice yoga thanks to her perseverance

GRACE PARAS/ANM

TEST YOUR NUTRITION IQ

Foody blues

Could your food choices contribute to your depression? Here's a quiz to find out how much you know about the connection between food and mood. Answer true or false.

1. Serotonin is a chemical that can make you feel relaxed and mellow.
2. Eating chocolate can make you feel mildly mellow.
3. Caffeine is a mood elevator.
4. Avoid carbohydrates when you need to feel calm.
5. A high-fat meal makes you feel alert.
6. Protein foods keep you alert.
7. One of the best things you can eat to feel relaxed and restful is chicken breast because it is loaded with the amino acid tryptophan.
8. Milk and cookies help you relax.

– McClatchy-Tribune Information Services.



ANSWERS: 1) True; 2) True; 3) True, but it can also keep you awake, and lack of sleep can cause depression. 4) False; 5) False; 6) True; 7) True; 8) True

Source: *Nutrition for Dummies* by Carol Ann Rinzler

– McClatchy-Tribune Information Services.

■ HOW STUFF WORKS

⚙️ How tofu and soy milk work

THEY ARE WIDELY regarded as healthier alternatives to cow’s milk and cheese. They’re a primary source of protein for vegans. But what exactly is soy milk and tofu? And what makes them good for you? Take a look at the nutritional properties and processes of these soy bean derivatives.

■ What is soy milk? To make soy milk, you start with dried soybeans. If you have never seen a soybean before, think of a dried black-eyed pea without the black eye. If you wanted to, you could grow soybeans in your backyard garden in the same way you grow green beans or peas, but most people buy the dried beans in bags at the store. To make soy milk, you start with half a cup of soybeans and soak them in water for half a day to

soften them. You grind up the beans in a blender and boil the bean pulp in a quart of water. Then you filter the pulp out with a cloth and save the liquid. Voila — one quart of soy milk. It’s a little like making coffee if you think about it. If you use a soy-milk maker, it will do the grinding, boiling and filtering for you, but it is exactly the same process.

■ What you have made is a liquid that is a lot like cow milk. One cup of 2 per cent cow milk contains about 5 grams of fat (in the form of cream) per cup. Soy milk also contains about 5 grams of fat (in the form of soybean oil) per cup. Cow milk contains about 8 grams of dairy protein. Soy milk contains about 7 grams

of vegetable protein. Cow milk contains about 12 grams of sugar (in the form of lactose). Soy milk contains about 5 grams of carbohydrates, and many people add sugar. In other words, cow milk and soy milk are quite similar. But if you are making soy milk yourself it is very inexpensive compared to cow milk. If you buy the beans in bulk, you can push the cost even lower.

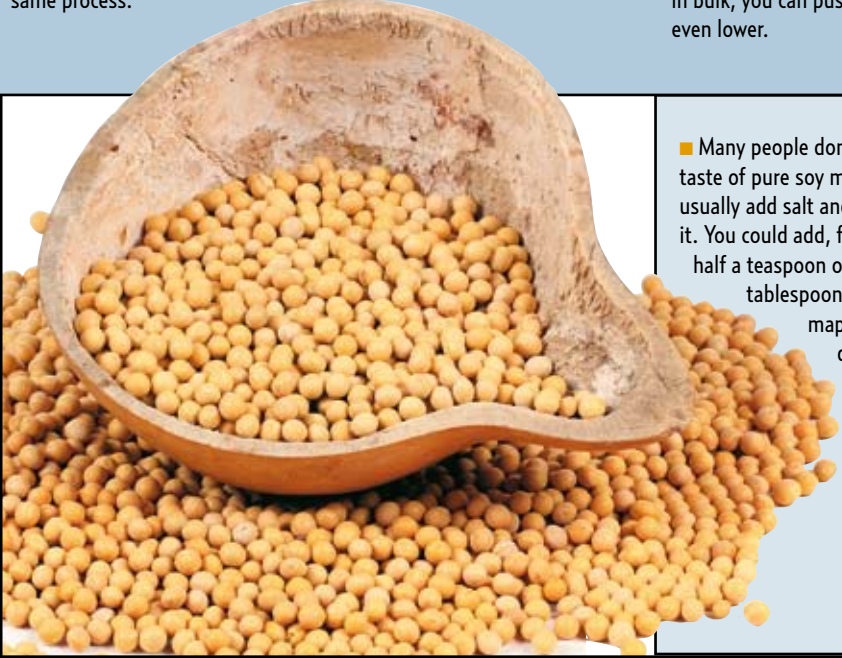
■ What about tofu? Tofu and cheese are nearly identical. To make cheese, you start with cow milk, coagulate it and press the curds. To make tofu, you start with soy milk, coagulate it and press the curds. To coagulate soy milk you use calcium sulfate, and the whole process of making tofu is pretty simple. You boil the soy milk and add calcium sulfate. Once the soy milk coagulates, you strain out the curds and wrap them in a cloth. Then you press the curds with three to five pounds of weight for 20 minutes. You normally press the curds in a small wooden or metal box that gives the tofu its traditional blocky shape. If you were to start with soaked soy beans, make the soy milk and then make tofu, the whole process would take less than 2 hours.

■ There are several advantages to tofu when you compare it to

cheese or meat. The biggest difference is fat and calories. 120 grams of cheddar cheese contains 40 grams of fat (most of it saturated animal fat) and 480 calories. 120 grams of firm tofu contains 5 grams of fat and only 80 calories. The cheese holds 24 grams of protein, while the tofu has 10 grams. The other thing that tofu contains is

isoflavones, which are thought to have a number of health benefits. In addition, the soy in tofu has shown some ability to lower “bad” cholesterol. When made from scratch, tofu is very inexpensive. As a source of high-quality, low-fat protein, that price is hard to beat.

– Marshall Brain/McClatchy-Tribune Information Services



Introducing 1969 babyGap Premium Denim



THE DUBAI MALL | DEIRA CITY CENTRE | MERCATO | BURJUMAN
ARABIAN CENTER | MARINA MALL | AL WAHDA MALL | AL JIMI MALL
COMING SOON AT MIRDIF CITY CENTRE