

THE SCIENTIFIC CONSENSUS ABOUT

*The
Healthy
Pasta Meal*

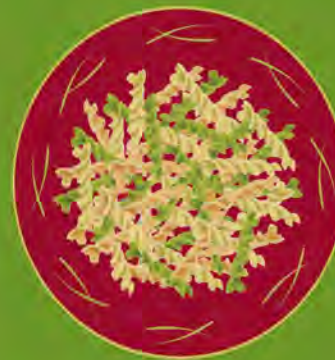
Symposium Session at the 11th Nutrition Conference
Federation of European Nutrition Societies Conference



Friday, October 28, 2011
Madrid Convention Centre • Madrid, Spain



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Introduction and context:

*Scientific consensus conference on
healthy pasta meals*

Federation of European Nutrition Societies
Madrid, Spain
October 28, 2011



Sara Baer-Sinnott
Oldways, Boston

*Let the old ways be your
guide to good health and
well-being.*

Oldways is a nonprofit food and nutrition education organization, with a mission to guide people to good health through heritage, using practical and positive programs grounded in science and tradition. Simply, we advocate for the healthful pleasures of real food.

“I have yet to hear of a traditional diet — from any culture, anywhere in the world — that is not substantially healthier than the ‘standard American diet.’ The more we honor cultural differences in eating, the healthier we will be.”

-- Michael Pollan, *The New York Times Magazine*, Sunday, October 2, 2011

Oldways

Known for its consumer food guides:

1. Mediterranean Diet Pyramid (1993)
2. Asian Diet Pyramid (1995)
3. Latin American Diet Pyramid (1996)
4. Vegetarian Diet Pyramid (1997)
5. African Heritage Diet Pyramid (to be announced November 9, 2011)



Oldways

Develops other programs:

1. Whole Grains Council and Stamp Program (2003)
2. Latino Nutrition Collection (2005)
3. Mediterranean Foods Alliance (2006)
4. Other international consumer education programs such as **The Healthy Pasta Meal** (2004)
5. Oldways Nutrition Exchange for Supermarket Dietitians
6. Culinary Travel

Oldways

Bringing together an interesting and powerful mix of professionals:

Scientists

Chefs

Food Industry

Journalists

Health Professionals

Supermarket and Retail Professionals

Community Organizations

By working TOGETHER, we can succeed and change the way people eat.

The Context

In 2002....

Low carb “fad diet du jour” arrived via
The New York Times Sunday Magazine story,
“What if Fat Doesn’t Make You Fat?”

Another fad diet...

As Dun Gifford, Oldways' Founder, wrote

This time the low-carb diet – another “rogue wave” fad diet – had rolled up out of the deep, and...dietary anarchy was once again on the loose.

- Companies made low-carb products.
- Consumers were confused – avoided carbs and anything that was “white food.”
- At first, consumers lost weight...but found they couldn't stay on the diet for long.
- There were potential long-term health risks.

To reverse this “rogue tidal wave” ...

In 2004...

Oldways organized a high-level scientific conference in Rome to review current nutrition evidence about carbohydrates in general and the traditional pasta meal in particular.

At its conclusion, the nutrition scientists in attendance from six countries issued a **Scientific Consensus Statement** on

THE HEALTHY PASTA MEAL

To Help Dispel Pasta Myths

Just prior to this 2004 conference, the cover story of a major news magazine [*Newsweek*] reported that white spaghetti was a food to avoid, because it had a high glycemic rating.

A nearly illegible footnote stated that the pasta with this rating *had been boiled for 20 minutes.*

Pasta and Partners

This surprised the Rome conference scientists, because anything cooked to inedible mush will consequently have an artificially inflated glycemic index.

- Pasta has a naturally low glycemic index
- No one eats pasta “naked”

This was part of the big news of the 2004 conference – and in the real world – helped consumers understand the healthfulness of the pasta meal.

[The Washington Post]

Recipes

Fried Squid With Chili-Garlic Mayonnaise

Braised Squid With Tomatoes and Peas

Halibut With Green Olive-Basil Relish

Pasta With Garlic and Oil

Orecchiette With Broccoli Raab

Lemon and Pine Nut Tagliatelle

More recipes inside

Food

F

*On the Fringe
Market Watch
Wine/Foraging*

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 3, 2004

MG PG VA

Pasta Fights Back



*Spaghetti, Linguine,
Tagliatelle et al.
Take On the
Low-Carb World*

By JUDITH WEINRAUB
Washington Post Staff Writer

oor pasta.

With low-carb diets stalking the land, a distrust of all carbohydrates—especially bread, potatoes, rice and pasta—has taken hold.

Now pasta is fighting back.

And nutritionally it has every right to, accord-

Spaghetti, rigatoni and linguine win a battle in the diet wars



Sandro Pace/The Associated Press

Michael Romano of New York's Union Square Café stirring sauce at the Rome conference.

By Elisabetta Povoledo

ROME: A conference promoting the health benefits of eating pasta has agreed that traditional Mediterranean eating patterns — which promote the consumption of carbohydrate-rich foods — are better than current Western dietary patterns, which are heavy on protein and saturated fats.

Scientists and nutritionists brought together by the Oldways Preservation and Exchange Trust, a Boston nutrition research and advocacy group, went a step further and identified foods that have a low glycemic index — a way of classifying food by how it is metabolized and how quickly it raises blood sugar — as possibly having “key roles” in preventing such chronic illnesses as obesity, diabetes, coronary heart disease and certain cancers.

Foods like spaghetti, linguine and rigatoni, for example. Titled “Healthy Pasta Meals,” the conference encouraged increased consumption of pasta — the cornerstone food of the traditional

eating patterns of people who live in the Mediterranean basin — because it has a low glycemic index.

Still, the scientific consensus statement issued at the end of the conference said that further research was required on the “long-term effects of low glycemic index diets.”

Oldways has long been a proponent of the Mediterranean diet, which also advocates ingesting fruits, vegetables, grains, olive oil and wine in moderation, but this was the first conference to focus on pasta, described in the final consensus statement as “the vehicle for ingredients of a healthy meal.”

“This is a rear-guard attack to defend the Mediterranean diet and things we think are good,” said Dr. John Foryst, director of the Behavioral Medicine Research Center at the Baylor College of Medicine in Houston.

“Traditional carbohydrate foods are in,” echoed Dr. David Jenkins, a nutrition expert at the University of Toronto’s medical school, during the closing session of the conference on Wednesday.

“Pasta has been resurrected.”

That’s good news for the conference sponsors, the Italian pasta maker Barilla, the American Italian Pasta Company, and the Consorzio Parmigiano-Reggiano, the Parmesan cheese lobby. The findings should especially please pasta makers and retailers operating in the United States, where sales have sagged in recent years as a result of the popularity of diets that advocate low carbohydrate consumption, like the Atkins diet or the South Beach diet.

“Here we’ve got a group of eminent scientists signing on to a statement against the low-carbohydrate hula hoop,” said K. Dun Gifford, president of Oldways.

Jenkins, from the University of Toronto, described the fight against low-carbohydrate diets in the United States as a losing battle, but feared new fronts opening up.

“We must stop that losing battle before it hits countries where the risk is losing their dietary heritage,” he said.

International Herald Tribune

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HEALTH

Is the low-carb backlash beginning?

Some foodmakers say moderate will replace extreme in diets

Tuesday, February 24, 2004 Posted: 10:07 AM EST (1507 GMT)

SCOTTSDALE, Arizona (Reuters) -- U.S. foodmakers are scrambling to satisfy consumer clamorings for low-carbohydrate products but also see a move toward more balanced eating that could spell doom for the strictest low-carb diets, like Atkins.

At an industry conference last week in Scottsdale, Arizona, companies including Kellogg Co. and Hershey Foods Corp. touted products such as low-carb cereals and chocolate bars catering to the millions of Americans following diets that eschew carbohydrates like bread, sugar and pasta



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Dining Out

The New York Times

YT D1

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 11, 2004

Pasta Lovers Take a Stand in Rome (Where Else?)

By FRANK BRUNI

ROME
THERE comes a time when a besmirched, besieged food must step up to the plate and defend its honor, or at least its carbohydrate count.

Here in the land that has loved and cooked it best, pasta is about to make its stand.

For three days next week, physicians, chefs, pasta manufacturers and other pasta partisans will gather in Italy's capital for a full-boiled response to the advances of the low-carbohydrate Atkins diet, which threatens to put rigatoni on the run.

"We're not dancing anymore," said K. Dun Gifford, the president of Oldways Preservation and Exchange Trust, the Boston nutrition research and advocacy group that is organizing the conference. "This is 'Pasta Fights Back.' It needs to."

Mr. Gifford was using the nickname that he and other participants have given the event. Officially titled Healthy Pasta Meals, it is more than a summit of experts and entrepreneurs who are invested, gastro-

nomically or financially, in the fate of fusilli. It is a telltale moment in the carbohydrate wars, a clear sign of just how tough it is these days to be a starch.

What with the Atkins and South Beach diets, Sugar Busters and Protein Power, the carbohydrate is viewed by many Americans as a positively menacing macronutrient, the evil root of all love handles.

"It's a frenzy," said Susan Toussaint, director of marketing for the American Italian Pasta Company of Kansas City, Mo., referring to the widespread shunning of carbohydrates in the United States.

Ms. Toussaint said that over the last 12 months, her company, a conference sponsor, had a roughly 5 percent drop in American grocery-store sales of its pasta.

She said that decline was typical of the pasta industry and that one reason was the indiscriminate vilification of all carbohydrates. "Pasta's getting lumped in the same category as Krispy Kreme," she said. "It's not fair. All carbohydrates are not created equal."

That is the overarching message of the conference. Its many sponsors and patrons also include Barilla, a leading Italian pasta manufacturer. Although few Italians have

Penne are under fire from carb warriors.

begun kneeling to the low-carbohydrate gods, trends do tend to travel across the Atlantic.

"If people stop eating pasta, it's bad for us," said Renzo Rizzo, a senior executive at Barilla.

Rome was chosen as the conference site for the semiotic and theatrical garnishes it provides. What better setting in which to praise pasta — and to point out that Italians, who eat it regularly, are generally slimmer, and live longer, than Americans?

Mr. Gifford has drafted scientists from around the world to make pasta's case.

"We're doing damage control for pasta, if you like," said Dr. David J. A. Jenkins, who teaches metabolism and nutrition at the University of Toronto's medical school.

Dr. Jenkins is an authority on the glyce-mic index, a measure of how quickly food is metabolized and how suddenly it raises

blood sugar. Steep jolts are widely considered bad for health and weight. He said that pasta's dense, compact nature means that it is digested more slowly than other starches.

Dr. Jenkins plans to explain all of this at the conference, which begins on Monday at the Cavalieri Hilton outside Rome's historic center. Also on the agenda are discussions of everything from cooking to cardiovascular disease, from the properties of wheat to fad diets through the ages.

"There was a graham-cracker diet at the beginning of the 1900's," said Mr. Gifford, whose group promotes a style of eating known as the Mediterranean diet.

The Mediterranean diet exalts olive oil, recommends restraint around red meat and makes ample allowance for pasta, which Michael Romano, the executive chef at the Union Square Cafe in Manhattan, described as a safe harbor in a confused culinary universe with "layers of mad cow disease and crazy chicken disease."

"It's good to try to find some sanity in all of this," said Mr. Romano, who will lend his talents to a big pasta dinner at the conference. "It's my comfort food. It's my soul food."

In a 2010 scientific conference
in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil...

20 scientists from 13 countries gathered
to update the **Healthy Pasta Meal** and
the **Scientific Consensus Statement**.

WHY?

Why focus on healthy pasta meals?

1. **Obesity on the rise**
2. **Lack of balance in diet**
3. **Consumer confusion about health and affordability of healthy food**
4. **Malnutrition in parts of the world**



HEALTHY PASTA MEAL SCIENTIFIC CONSENSUS STATEMENT

Pasta made headlines around the world in late October 2010 when nutrition scientists from four continents met in Rio de Janeiro to discuss pasta and health. Their conclusions? Pasta is a healthy carbohydrate food, and is a key ingredient of healthy traditional diets around the world, including the Mediterranean and Latin American Diets.

To learn WHY pasta is healthy, take a look at the conclusions of the Healthy Pasta Meal Scientific Consensus Statement, agreed upon by the prestigious international scientists when they met in Rio, and also at the summary of a selection of scientific studies supporting these points.

Points of the Scientific Consensus Statement

1. Scientific research increasingly supports the importance of total diet, rather than individual foods and nutrients.

Although a number of particular foods are called “superfoods,” carrying specific nutrients to the body, overall health and wellness truly reflects overarching, everyday eating patterns. These patterns start with establishing a diet abundant in fresh, healthful foods that simply crowd out the less healthy foods. This big-picture approach to diet has been found to be the most sustainable, enjoyable and important path to wellbeing.



2. Pasta is a key component of many of the world’s traditional healthy eating patterns, such as the scientifically proven Mediterranean Diet. Traditional dietary patterns confer greater health benefits than current Western dietary patterns.

Traditional diet patterns, like the Mediterranean Diet, have proven to offer greater health benefits than current Western diets. Scientific research shows that these diet patterns may lower the incidences of major chronic diseases such as diabetes, heart disease, some types of cancer and obesity. These patterns are characterized by eating mostly a variety of plant foods (fruits, vegetables, breads, pasta, whole grains, potatoes, beans, nuts, and seeds), olive and other plant oils as the principal source of fat, seafood at least twice a week, dairy products (mostly cheese and yogurt), poultry and eggs in reasonable portion sizes daily or several times per week, red meat and sweets consumed less often, and wine with meals (up to one glass for women, two for men). Pasta and pasta meals—on a plate or in a bowl—are included in traditional diets around the world.

3. Many clinical trials confirm that excess calories, and not carbohydrates, are responsible for obesity. Diets successful in promoting weight loss can emphasize a range of healthy carbohydrates, protein, and fat. These three macronutrients, in balance, are essential for designing a healthy, individualized diet anyone can follow for their whole life. Moreover, very low-carb diets may not be safe, especially in the long term.

Carbohydrates are not a “public enemy” to waistlines. Modern consumers do not have to throw pasta, breads, and life-long favorite meals overboard in order to feel they’re eating well. The truth is that “good” carbohydrates are extremely health-promoting, and eating too much food (too many calories) with little physical activity is the reason people gain weight. Eliminating one of the body’s three vital macronutrients—proteins, carbohydrates or fats—in order to lose weight is like taking a car’s engine out to help it run better. Carbohydrates are essential for brain function, total body energy and, yes, effective weight management. Feel free to pick up a fork and reclaim health and optimal weight over a pasta meal!



4. At a time when obesity and diabetes are rising around the world, pasta meals and other low-glycemic foods may help control blood sugar and weight especially in overweight people. Glycemic index is one of many factors that impact the healthfulness of foods.

Pasta is low on the glycemic index—a good thing—which means that the body digests it more slowly than most other carbohydrates. Pasta does not cause sugar in the blood to rise quickly and therefore fortifies the body with a sustained, balanced supply of energy, keeping us full and fit. The glycemic index of the pasta meal is even lower, because we eat pasta with other healthy foods.

5. Pasta is an affordable healthy choice available in almost all societies. Promoting the affordability and accessibility of pasta meals can help overcome the misperception that healthy foods are too expensive.

Pasta may be the most convenient, delicious health food out there. It can be found at almost any grocery store, in an array of styles and brands. Kids love it and can share it with their grandparents. It can be served cold at a summer picnic or dressed at dinner parties. It's good for adventurous palates and simple tastes. It is not expensive and it's quick to prepare; it's a regular on restaurant menus and grocery shelves; and, a pasta meal actually works two-fold by being a fantastic vehicle for other healthy foods.

6. Healthy pasta meals are a delicious way to eat more vegetables, legumes, and other healthy foods often under-consumed.

Pasta meals are very efficient “delivery systems” for other healthy foods. Pasta is not eaten by itself, but joined with “partners on the plate” such as vegetables, olive oil, tomatoes, herbs, legumes, and lean cuts of poultry and meat, fish and shellfish. By combining these multiple healthy ingredients, it becomes a pasta meal, slowing digestion and absorption of sugar in the blood while providing essential nutrients such as fiber, protein, vitamins and minerals.



7. Pasta meals are enjoyed in cultural traditions worldwide, as they are versatile and easily adaptable to national/regional seasonal ingredients.



Whether it's spaghetti with tomatoes and basil in Italy, soup with pasta in Mexico and South America, or whole grain penne with zucchini in Canada or the U.S., pasta is universal. It is the canvas of dishes, ready to take on the portrait of any region in spices, herbs and other regional foods. Conveniently, it will also be a home for whatever is in the fridge: a little bit of garlic, oil and any vegetables and herbs will make for a gourmet meal at home!

8. Doctors, nutritionists, and other health professionals should recommend varied and balanced pasta meals for good health.

“Eat more pasta” is one dietary recommendation that will make any health professional a patient's hero. Many people know that they should be reaching for more vegetables, beans and leaner proteins. Many have also had countless plates of spaghetti and tomatoes or tomato sauce. What most people may not know is the versatility of pasta and how it can be used to usher in other food recommendations. It may be hard to go from hot dogs to Brussels sprouts, but it's all in the accompaniment and flavoring. A bowl of steamed carrots and broccoli looks a lot more appealing and satisfying on a bed of pasta than on its own, and it could possibly go a long way toward saving or lengthening a life.

*“Eat more pasta”
is one dietary recommendation
that will make any health
professional a patient's hero.*



▲ Why the Mediterranean Diet is Effective for Weight Loss

Focusing on burning enough calories alone rarely results in lasting weight loss, unless meaningful lifestyle and behavioral changes are also added. A team at the University of Murcia in Spain has found that, although many types of diets result in weight loss, the Mediterranean Diet is especially effective because it is suited to the social and daily life of patients and can easily be followed in the long term. Therefore, counseling programs built around the Med Diet are very likely to succeed.

Nutrición Hospitalaria, 2010; 25:9-17.

▲ Low Glycemic Foods Help Reduce Risk of Chronic Disease

Scientists at the University of Toronto reviewed evidence related to glycemic index and health. They concluded that foods low on the glycemic index (GI) are associated with higher levels of HDL (“good”) cholesterol, and that they may decrease the risk of developing diabetes and cardiovascular disease. Some studies have also found a link between high-glycemic foods and certain cancers.

Journal of the American College of Nutrition, August 2009; 28 Suppl:439S-445S.

▲ Benefits of Low-Glycemic Diets over Higher Protein Diets

Although all reduced-calorie diets can achieve weight loss, the challenge is to do so without increasing the risk of chronic disease, and without regaining the weight after the diet concludes. A team of researchers at the University of Sydney reviewed and compared evidence for two types of diets: one low in overall carbs and high in protein, and one high in low-glycemic-index carbohydrates. They concluded that both types of diet result in weight loss, but that the evidence suggested that low-carb diets have the potential for increased risk of disease.

Asia Pacific Journal of Clinical Nutrition, 2008;17 Suppl 1:16-9. Nutrition Reviews, April 2008; 66(4):171-82

▲ Low GI and Low GL Diets Protect Against Chronic Disease

Look to the Index: A team at the University of Sydney found that low GI and/or low GL diets alone reduce the risk of certain chronic diseases. In diabetes and heart disease, the protection is comparable with that seen for whole grain and high fiber intakes. The findings support the general theory that high glycemic foods have a direct link to the development of certain chronic diseases.

American Journal of Clinical Nutrition, 2008; 87:627-37



Pasta And Whole Grains: A Delicious, Healthy Relationship

For extra health benefits, try a whole grain pasta variety for dinner. Whole grains provide a healthy mix of nutrients proven to be beneficial in the fight against heart disease, strokes, type 2 diabetes, even obesity. Pasta is a delicious and family-friendly way to add more whole grains to any diet.

There are a wide range of whole grain pasta options, from gluten-free to 100% whole wheat. Some manufacturers have even created pastas that blend traditional refined semolina with whole grain ingredients. The taste of these whole grain pastas ranges from nutty and rich to smooth and mild, offering options to even the most discerning palate. As with regular pastas, it is always a good idea to prepare whole-grain pastas according to package directions. However, whole grain varieties tend to dry out a bit faster once removed from boiling water, so try to add sauces or coatings as quickly as possible.

Pasta is a delicious and family-friendly way to add more whole grains to any diet.



This symposium program focuses on these points...

- Role of **total** diet
- Weight loss & management
- Vegetable consumption, affordability, & cultural traditions
- Improving health communications

Thank You!

