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# VEPACHEDU EDUCATIONAL FOUNDATION

The Telangana Science Journal

Health and Nutrition

[TIACS-subscribe@yahoo.com](mailto:TIACS-subscribe@yahoo.com) (The Indian American Chemical Society)

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### **Old Age and Health**

World population is likely to keep growing throughout the 21st century. The number of people on Earth is likely to reach 11 billion by 2100. Most of the anticipated growth is in Africa, where population is projected to quadruple from around 1 billion today to 4 billion by the end of the century. The main reason is that birth rates in sub-Saharan Africa have not been going down as fast as had been expected. There is an 80 percent chance that the population in Africa at the end of the century will be between 3.5 billion and 5.1 billion people. Other regions of the world are projected to see less change. Asia, now 4.4 billion, is projected to peak at around 5 billion people in 2050 and then begin to decline. Populations in North America, Europe, and Latin America and the Caribbean are projected to stay below 1 billion each<sup>1</sup>.

Ageing is a global issue, because old people tend to have a worse quality of life in poor countries. The Global Age Watch Index predicts that as the poor world ages, millions face a bleak old age. Afghanistan is the worst place among those surveyed to be old, while Norway is the most age-friendly, then Sweden and Switzerland.

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Worldwide, life expectancy has doubled in the past half century to 66 years. A century ago, Britons could only expect to live to 47; now fewer than a dozen nations do worse than that. Costa Ricans, Taiwanese and Cubans can expect to live as long as Americans. Some countries with increasing wealth ignore their older citizens. Much of the global longevity revolution is down to falling infant death rates. But the future lifespan of those who make it to 60 is also rising fast – in poor nations as much as rich ones. On average a woman aged 60 today can expect to live until she is 82. Men can expect to reach 79 years. China already has more old people than any other country, and will probably have 150 million people over 75 by mid-century<sup>ii</sup>.

Despite leading the world in pioneering anti-smoking laws, cancer screening and controlling high blood pressure, the US trails its richer "peer" countries in almost all other measures of health and longevity<sup>iii</sup>.

## Genetically Engineered Crops

Genetically engineered crops were first introduced in 1996. Today, 19 genetically engineered plant species are approved for use in the United States, including the major crops used extensively in animal feed: alfalfa, canola, corn, cotton, soybean and sugar beet. Food-producing animals such as cows, pigs, goats, chickens and other poultry species now consume 70 to 90 percent of all genetically engineered crops. The performance and health of food-producing animals consuming genetically engineered feed, first introduced 18 years ago, has been comparable to that of animals consuming non-GE feed<sup>iv</sup>.

## Strength Training for Memory

A new study published recently in the journal *Acta Psychologica*, shows that an intense workout of at least 20 minutes can enhance episodic memory, also known as long-term memory for previous events, by about 10 percent in healthy young adults. While many previous studies have demonstrated that aerobic exercises such as running can improve memory, the current study had participants leg extension resistance exercise just once two days before testing them, because of extensive animal research suggesting that the period after learning (or consolidation) is when the arousal or stress caused by exercise is most likely to benefit memory<sup>v</sup>.

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## Rapunzel Syndrome

Eighteen-year-old Aypero Alekseeva from Kyrgyzstan have been eating hair from the carpet and chewing the tips of her own hair. She could not properly eat or drink. Surprisingly, it was found that the problem was due to a massive 9-pound hairball blocking her digestive system after years of . After an emergency surgery, surgeons at Bishkek Hospital in the country's capital for surgery successfully removed the hairball that otherwise would've led to her death<sup>vi</sup>.

## Omega Fatty Acids

Good sources of omega-3s include flax, walnuts, almonds, urad (black gram), purselane<sup>vii</sup> (verdalago), Indian spinach, spinach etc. A recent study noted that a short two-week course of a nutritional supplement containing one such omega-3 polyunsaturated fatty acid reduced the rates of new-onset depression to 10%. **Eicosa-pentaenoic acid (EPA)** and **docosa-hexaenoic acid (DHA)** delayed the onset of depression, and both treatments were well tolerated, with no serious side effects<sup>viii</sup>.

## Spinach and Flax Paratha

This spinach and flax seed paratha tastes good and it is also healthy with rich in iron, calcium, protein, fiber and omega-3- fatty acids.

Ingredients: 1 cup spinach; 2 scoops golden flax seed; 3 cups all purpose flour; 2 tsp olive oil; 1/2 tsp cumin; pinch of turmeric; 2 green onions; 1/2 onion; 4-6 curry leaves; 1-2 green chillies; 1/2 tsp pepper powder; 1/2 tsp coriander powder; 1/2 tsp garam masala powder (curry powder); 5-6 cilantro; and 1 tsp Salt.

In a pan, add olive oil, cumin, onion, thin sliced green chillies, crushed garlic, curry leaves and turmeric; and sauté. Add finely chopped spinach and fry it till soft and then add green onion, salt, coriander powder, pepper powder, garam masala, cilantro and mix it well. Let it cool down<sup>ix</sup>.

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Om! Asatoma Sadgamaya, Tamasoma Jyotirgamaya, Mrityorma Amritamgamaya, Om Shantih, Shantih, Shantih!  
(Aum! Lead the world from wrong path to the right path, from ignorance to knowledge, from mortality to immortality, and peace!)

<sup>i</sup>Available at: <http://www.biospace.com/News/world-population-to-keep-growing-this-century-hit/347152>

<sup>ii</sup><http://www.newscientist.com/article/dn26289-the-best-and-worst-countries-in-the-world-to-be-old-in.html>

<sup>iii</sup><http://www.newscientist.com/article/mg21729003.500-life-expectancy-lower-in-us-than-other-rich-countries.html>

<sup>iv</sup><http://www.biospace.com/News/no-sign-of-health-or-nutrition-problems-from-gmo/348468/source=Featured>.

<sup>v</sup><http://www.biospace.com/News/lifting-weights-can-improve-your-memory-georgia/348632>

<sup>vi</sup><http://www.biospace.com/News/teenage-girl-with-rapunzel-syndrome-has-massive-9/348651>

<sup>vii</sup><http://www.vepachedu.com/tsjNovember2004.html>

<sup>viii</sup><http://www.biospace.com/News/reports-new-study-in-biological-psychiatry-kings/348638>. See also <http://www.vepachedu.org/TSJ/TSJ-July-2011.pdf>;

[www.vepachedu.org/TSJ/tsj-February-2011.pdf](http://www.vepachedu.org/TSJ/tsj-February-2011.pdf); [www.vepachedu.org/TSJ/TSJ-July-2010.pdf](http://www.vepachedu.org/TSJ/TSJ-July-2010.pdf); <http://www.vepachedu.org/TSJ/TSJ-May-2012.pdf>;

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<sup>ix</sup><http://mepoornima.wordpress.com/2011/02/16/spinach-and-flax-seed-paratha/>; accessed 30 September 2014

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