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VEPACHEDU EDUCATIONAL FOUNDATION

The Telangana Science Journal

Health and Nutrition

TIACS-subscribe@yahoogroups.com (The Indian American Chemical Society)

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Smiles and Stress

Researchers at the University of Kansas subjected college students to anxiety-inducing tasks and found that those who smiled through them appeared to have less stress. The study is led by research psychologists Tara Kraft and Sarah Pressman "Age-old adages, such as 'grin and bear it,' have suggested smiling to be not only an important nonverbal indicator of happiness but also wishfully promotes smiling as a panacea for life's stressful events," Kraft said in a journal news release. "We wanted to examine whether these adages had scientific merit; whether smiling could have real health-relevant benefits." The study found that participants who wore any kind of smile were less stressed during the tasks than those with neutral facial expressions, and stress levels dipped especially low for folks with "genuine" smiles. <http://health.usnews.com/health-news/news/articles/2012/07/31/smile33-it-might-lower-your-stress-level-study-shows>

Depression and Anxiety

People with mild mental illnesses such as anxiety or depression are more likely to die early, a study reports. They looked at the premature deaths from conditions such as heart disease and cancer of people in England. The research suggested low level distress raised the risk by 16%, once lifestyle factors such as drinking and smoking were taken into account. More serious problems increased it by 67%, the University College London and Edinburgh University team said. <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/health-19061271>

Cat Owners in no Danger

Two groups of researchers have published articles in the journal Biology Letters, suggesting that it's time we stop blaming cats for making people crazy or for a certain type of brain cancer that other researchers have linked to a parasite in cat feces. The first group, with the Tour du Valat research center, says that after looking at all the current research findings they can find no evidence linking cats and brain cancer in people. The second team, from Oxford University's Cancer Epidemiology Unit, after conducting what they call the "Million Woman Survey" has found among many other things, that there was no more incidence of brain cancer in women who owned cats than in those who did not. <http://medicalxpress.com/news/2012-08-blaming-cats-brain-cancer-people.html#jCp>

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Green Tea Extract vs Cancer

The extract, known as epigallocatechin gallate, has been known to have preventative anti-cancer properties but fails to reach tumors when delivered by conventional intravenous administration. However, in initial laboratory tests, researchers used an approach that allowed the treatment to be delivered specifically to the tumors after intravenous administration. The researchers encapsulated the green tea extract in vesicles that also carried transferrin, a plasma protein that transports iron through the blood. Receptors for transferrin are found in large amounts in many cancers. Nearly two-thirds of the tumors it was delivered to either shrank or disappeared within one month and the treatment displayed no side effects to normal tissues. <http://phys.org/news/2012-08-green-tea-compound-tackling-cancer.html#jCp>

Acai

Researchers found that a commercially available acai berry product can lengthen the lives of fruit flies, when the flies' lives are made short through additional oxidative stress. Under certain conditions (a simple sugar diet) acai supplementation could triple flies' lifespans, from eight to 24 days. Acai could also counteract the neurotoxic effects of the herbicide paraquat on the flies. http://news.emory.edu/stories/2012/08/acai_drosophila/index.html

Babies and Antibiotics

Treating babies with antibiotics risks making them overweight as they grow up, say scientists. A study of more than 11,000 children found those given the drugs before they were six months old had a bigger BMI (body mass index) than their peers. By the time they were just over three exposed children were 22 per cent more likely to be overweight. <http://www.biospace.com/News/giving-babies-antibiotics-could-lead-to-obesity/270710>

Sleep Improves Memory in those with Parkinson's

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While the classic symptoms of Parkinson's disease include tremors and slow movements, Parkinson's can also affect someone's memory, including "working memory." Working memory is defined as the ability to temporarily store and manipulate information, rather than simply repeat it. The use of working memory is important in planning, problem solving and independent living. The findings underline the importance of addressing sleep disorders in the care of patients with Parkinson's, and indicate that working memory capacity in patients with Parkinson's potentially can be improved with training.

<http://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2012/08/120821115003.htm>

A new study appearing in Nature Neuroscience has found that if certain odors are presented after tones during sleep, people will start sniffing when they hear the tones alone -- even when no odor is present -- both during sleep and, later, when awake. In other words, people can learn new information while they sleep, and this can unconsciously modify their waking behavior.

<http://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2012/08/120826143531.htm>

Oral Health

An article published in the Journal of the American Geriatrics Society found that brushing your teeth daily may help prevent dementia. Researchers who followed nearly 5,500 elderly people over an 18-year-period found that those who reported brushing their teeth less than once a day were up to 65% more likely to develop dementia than those who brushed daily. Inflammation stoked by gum disease-related bacteria is implicated in a host of conditions including heart disease, stroke and diabetes. Some studies have also found that people with Alzheimer's disease, the most common form of dementia, have more gum disease-related bacteria in their brains than a person without Alzheimer's.

<http://www.timeslive.co.za/lifestyle/2012/08/21/brushing-your-teeth-may-save-your-mind-study>

Teen Well-Being Contributed to by Parents

Teenagers are famous for seeking independence from their parents, but research shows that many teens continue to spend time with their parents and that this shared time is important for teens' well-being, according to researchers. Apparently, the stereotype of teens not spending time with parents anymore is, well, a stereotype. According to research, teens continue to spend time with their parents and that this

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shared time, especially shared time with fathers, has important implications for their psychological and social adjustment. <http://www.biospace.com/News/time-with-parents-is-important-for-teens-well/270714>

Coconut Water

According to research, coconut water really is nature's sports drink. Coconut water contains everything average sports drinks do, and more! It contains 5 times more potassium than Gatorade or Powerade. Overall, it's a healthy and natural drink that replenishes lost nutrients during moderate workouts. The potassium may benefit people that don't exercise too. Since the typical American diet is high in sodium but low in potassium, we get an unhealthy imbalance. This leads to higher risk of death by heart disease and 50 percent higher risk of death by all causes. The coconut water may help balance this out. Not that it's a replacement for a healthy and balanced diet.

<http://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2012/08/120820143902.htm>

Arts

People with an active interest in the arts contribute more to society than those with little or no such interest, researchers found. They analyzed arts exposure, defined as attendance at museums and dance, music, opera and theater events; and arts expression, defined as making or performing art. Apparently, even after controlling for age, race and education, participation in the arts, especially as audience, predicted civic engagement, tolerance and altruism.

<http://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2012/08/120816151809.htm>

Exercise

Engaging in more than two hours of physical activity per week appears to help pre-menopausal women maintain healthy bones, new research suggests. The finding is based on the impact that even small amounts of exercise seem to have on curtailing the production of a protein that impedes bone growth, while at the same time increasing the activity of another protein that promotes bone formation.

<http://www.biospace.com/News/a-few-hours-of-weekly-exercise-may-help-womens/270291>

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Sanskrit, the Mother of Indo-European Languages

Biologists using tools developed for drawing evolutionary family trees say that they have solved a longstanding problem in archaeology: the origin of the Indo-European family of languages. The family includes English and most other European languages, as well as Persian, Hindi and many others. An outdated belief is that the first speakers of the mother tongue, known as proto-Indo-European, were chariot-driving pastoralists who burst out of their homeland on the steppes above the Black Sea about 4,000 years ago and conquered Europe and Asia. A more accepted theory holds that, to the contrary, the first Indo-European speakers were peaceable farmers in Anatolia, now Turkey, about 9,000 years ago, who disseminated their language by the hoe, not the sword. The new entrant to the debate is an evolutionary biologist, Quentin Atkinson of the University of Auckland in New Zealand. He and colleagues have taken the existing vocabulary and geographical range of 103 Indo-European languages and computationally walked them back in time and place to their statistically most likely origin. They found decisive support for an Anatolian origin over a steppe origin. Both the timing and the root of the tree of Indo-European languages “fit with an agricultural expansion from Anatolia beginning 8,000 to 9,500 years ago, they report. http://www.nytimes.com/2012/08/24/science/indo-european-languages-originated-in-anatolia-analysis-suggests.html?_r=1&ref=science

Grapes

Consuming grapes may help protect heart health in people with metabolic syndrome, according to new research published in the Journal of Nutrition. Researchers observed a reduction in key risk factors for heart disease in men with metabolic syndrome: reduced blood pressure, improved blood flow and reduced inflammation. Natural components found in grapes, known as polyphenols, are thought to be responsible for these beneficial effects. Metabolic syndrome is a cluster of conditions that occur together – increased blood pressure, a high blood sugar level, excess body fat around the waist or low HDL (the good cholesterol) and increased blood triglycerides – significantly increasing the risk for heart disease, stroke and diabetes. Metabolic syndrome is a major public health concern, and is on the rise in the U.S. The study is believed to be the first to look at the impact of grapes on metabolic syndrome.

http://www.eurekalert.org/pub_releases/2012-08/fi-egm080812.php

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Americans Lie

Recent evidence indicates that Americans average about 11 lies per week. Researchers wanted to find out if less lying could lead to better health. The study found that the participants could purposefully and dramatically reduce their everyday lies, and that in turn significantly improved health.

<http://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2012/08/120806093944.htm>

Health and Grades

Having a healthy heart and lungs may be one of the most important factors for middle school students to make good grades in math and reading, according to findings presented at the American Psychological Association's 120th Annual Convention. The study showed that cardiorespiratory fitness was the only factor that was consistently found to have an impact on both boys' and girls' grades on reading and math tests. <http://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2012/08/120803102933.htm>

Honey

A recent study shows that just a spoonful of honey before bed eases coughs in children. Reports by parents also show that kids had less frequent and severe coughing. Honey provides a safe and healthy alternative to common cough medications. Whereas many medications have side effects, honey doesn't. This also gets rid on the concern that parents may accidentally give too much medication to their child. <http://www.foxnews.com/health/2012/08/06/honey-may-ease-nighttime-coughing-in-kids/>

Coffee

A recent study has shown that people with Parkinson's saw slight improvements in movement, after drinking coffee or taking a caffeine pill. Similar studies have shown that people who use caffeine are less likely to get Parkinson's. Although the results are exciting, this is one of the first studies on humans to show improvement in people that already have Parkinson's.

<http://www.foxnews.com/health/2012/08/02/caffeine-may-provide-some-parkinson-relief/>

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Obesity

Childhood obesity could be affecting puberty timing and ability to reproduce, especially in females. A body of research suggests that obesity could be related to growing problems with infertility, scientists said in a recent review, in addition to a host of other physical and psychosocial concerns. The analysis was published in *Frontiers in Endocrinology*. Human bodies may be scrambling to adjust to a problem that is fairly new. For thousands of years of evolution, poor nutrition or starvation was a greater concern, rather than an overabundance of food. <http://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2012/07/120731135003.htm>
People with a normal body mass index, or BMI, and “central obesity” as defined by a high waist-to-hip ratio had the greatest risk of cardiovascular-related death and the highest death risk overall, researchers said today in a statement. The risk of cardiovascular death was 2.75 times higher and the risk of death from all causes was 2.08 times higher compared with subjects with normal BMI and a normal waist-to-hip ratio. <http://www.bloomberg.com/news/2012-08-27/fat-bellied-people-at-higher-death-risk-than-obese.html>

Being obese in middle age is a known risk factor, not only for heart disease, but also for dementia. But in recent years, there’s been some suggestion that the so-called “healthy” obese, those whose obesity is not accompanied by other risk factors like high glucose or high cholesterol, don’t have an increased risk of heart disease or other health conditions. What wasn’t known, however, was whether the healthy obese are also safe from the more rapid decline in cognitive function. Now, researchers in Europe have answered this question. According to a new study, published in the journal *Neurology*, obesity in and of itself increases the speed of mental decline over time. There is no “healthy overweight” when it comes to preserving your mind. <http://www.foxnews.com/health/2012/08/20/study-shows-obesity-weighs-heavily-on-brain/#ixzz259zD31Ps>

A recent study in the *Journal of the American Chemical Society* has found a molecular on/off switch for enzymes, specifically, the ones responsible for breaking down fat. This could potentially be useful for curing obesity and other related diseases. <http://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2012/08/120822222653.htm>

Waist and ED

A study published in the *British Journal of Urology International* found three quarters of the overweight men suffered from erectile dysfunction compared to a third of those with trim waists. Those who had a

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larger waistline were also more likely to suffer from a disrupted night's sleep as 44 per cent had to get up twice to urinate compared to just 16 per cent of their slimmer peers. The study also found the heavier the men were, the more likely they were to experience problems. It is the first time scientists have shown comprehensively that obesity can affect more than a man's heart and metabolism.

A body of research suggests that obesity could be related to growing problems with infertility, scientists said in a recent review, in addition to a host of other physical and psycho-social concerns. The analysis was published in *Frontiers in Endocrinology*. Human bodies may be scrambling to adjust to a problem that is fairly new. For thousands of years of evolution, poor nutrition or starvation were a greater concern, rather than an over-eating.

A survey by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention shows 12 states now have very high obesity rates. Overall, more than a third of adults are obese but rates vary by state. The latest figures are based on a 2011 telephone survey that asked adults their height and weight. For the first time, households with only cell phones were included. State rates remained about the same although states with very high rates went from nine to 12. At least 30 percent of adults are obese in Alabama, Arkansas, Indiana, Kentucky, Louisiana, Michigan, Mississippi, Missouri, Oklahoma, South Carolina, Texas and West Virginia.

Chocolate

Chocolate might not be the healthiest thing for your waistline - but research suggests it may protect against stroke. Studies following more than 37,000 Swedish men showed those eating the most chocolate were the least likely to have a stroke. It follows on from other studies that have suggested eating chocolate can improve the health of the heart. <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/health-19402143>

Piano and Brain

Tuning a piano also tunes the brain; say researchers who have seen structural changes within the brains of professional piano tuners. Researchers found listening to two notes played simultaneously makes the brain adapt. Brain scans revealed highly specific changes in the hippocampus, which governs memory and navigation. <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/health-19398413>

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Smoking

Smokers who are trying to cut down or quit might want to take a jog the next time a cigarette craving overcomes them, according to a British study. Researchers, whose findings appeared in the journal *Addiction*, combined the data from previous clinical trials and found that a bout of exercise generally helped hopeful quitters reduce their nicotine cravings - though whether that translated into a greater chance of quitting was unclear. <http://www.reuters.com/article/2012/08/27/us-smoking-idUSBRE87Q00Z20120827>

Maternal smoking during pregnancy is associated with wheeze and asthma in preschool children, even among children who were not exposed to maternal smoking late in pregnancy or after birth, according to a new study. "Epidemiological evidence suggests that exposure to maternal smoking during fetal and early life increases the risk of childhood wheezing and asthma, but earlier studies were not able to differentiate the effects of prenatal and postnatal exposure," said lead author Åsa Neuman. <http://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2012/08/120817083911.htm>

Chocolate

A daily dose of chocolate or cocoa powder could help lower blood pressure, say the authors of a new systematic review. The review of 20 previous studies found that people who were given dark chocolate or cocoa powder daily showed a slight drop in blood pressure, compared with control groups. The studies were all short term — mostly lasting two to eight weeks — so it's not clear how long the blood pressure benefits would last, but the "small reduction we saw over the short term might complement other treatment options and might contribute to reducing the risk of cardiovascular disease," said lead researcher Dr. Karin Ried. <http://healthland.time.com/2012/08/15/sweet-a-little-chocolate-a-day-may-help-lower-blood-pressure/>

Pregnancy

Among pregnant women who did not develop gestational diabetes, overweight women were 65 percent more likely, and obese women 163 percent more likely, to have overly large babies than their healthy

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weight counterparts. In this study, an overly large infant was identified based on having a birth weight over the 90th percentile for their gestational age at delivery and gender. Gaining excess weight during pregnancy also contributed to having a large for gestational age baby, regardless of maternal weight or whether she developed gestational diabetes. <http://www.redorbit.com/news/health/1112675809/large-babies-more-likely-for-overweight-women/>

Multilingualism and Music

Code-switching or switching back and forth between different languages happens all the time in multilingual environments, and often in emotional situations. In a new article in the July issue of Perspectives on Psychological Science, drawing on research from psychology and linguistics, the researchers seek to better understand how using different languages to discuss and express emotions in a multilingual family might play an important role in children's emotional development. They propose that the particular language parents choose to use when discussing and expressing emotion can have significant impacts on children's emotional understanding, experience, and regulation.

Additionally, research from linguistics suggests that when bilingual individuals switch languages, the way they experience emotions changes as well. Bilingual parents may use a specific language to express an emotional concept because they feel that language provides a better cultural context for expressing the emotion. For example, a native Telugu speaker may be more likely to use English to tell her children that she loves them because it is uncommon to express such emotions in Telugu.

A study of primary school pupils who spoke English or Italian - half of whom also spoke Gaelic or Sardinian- found that the bilingual children were significantly more successful in the tasks set for them. The Gaelic-speaking children were, in turn, more successful than the Sardinian speakers. The differences were linked to the mental alertness required to switch between languages, which could develop skills useful in other types of thinking. The further advantage for Gaelic-speaking children may have been due to the formal teaching of the language and its extensive literature.

Bilingualism or multilingualism is now largely seen by scientists as being beneficial to children and that it provides benefits the old as well. Yet, there remains an ignorant and outdated view that it can be confusing, and so potentially detrimental to them. The study has found that it could have demonstrable

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benefits, not only in language but in arithmetic, problem solving and enabling children to think creatively. There was a marked difference in the level of detail and richness in description from the bilingual pupils. We also found they had an aptitude for selective attention - the ability to identify and focus on information which is important, while filtering out what is not - which could come from the 'code-switching' of thinking in two different languages.

Once likened to a confusing tower of Babel, speaking more than one language can actually bolster brain function by serving as a mental gymnasium.

The impact of learning a second language on the brain is related to the need to inhibit one language system when speaking, reading or thinking in the other. The mental process required to play a musical instrument may work in the same way as juggling dual languages to strengthen the connections in your brain over time.

A study, published in the July issue of *Frontiers in Human Neuroscience*, shows that musical instrument training may reduce the effects of mental decline associated with aging. The research found that older adults who learned music in childhood and continued to play an instrument for at least 10 years outperformed others in tests of memory and cognitive ability.

Compared to peers with no musical training, adults with one to five years of musical training as children had enhanced brain responses to complex sounds, making them more effective at pulling out the fundamental frequency of the sound signal. The fundamental frequency, which is the lowest frequency in sound, is crucial for speech and music perception, allowing recognition of sounds in complex and noisy auditory environments. <http://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2012/08/120821212626.htm>

Emotions and Verbs

Two new studies from *Psychological Science*, a journal of the Association for Psychological Science, explore the ways in which the interaction between language and emotion influences our well-being. One study was to see whether putting feelings into words helps us cope with scary situations. Researchers investigated whether verbalizing a current emotional experience, even when that experience is negative, might be an effective method for treating for people with spider phobias. The findings suggest that talking about your feelings -- even if they're negative -- may help you to cope with a scary situation. The other

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study was whether verbs we use affects mood and happiness. To investigate whether using these different wordings might affect our mood and overall happiness, researchers conducted four experiments in which participants either recalled or experienced a positive, negative, or neutral event. The authors conclude that one potential way to improve mood could be to talk about negative past events as something that already happened as opposed to something that was happening.

<http://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2012/08/120823161917.htm>

Turmeric

Researchers, whose results were published in the journal Diabetes Care, found that over nine months, a daily dose of curcumin seemed to prevent new cases of diabetes among people with so-called prediabetes - abnormally high blood sugar levels that may progress to full-blown type 2 diabetes. Curcumin is a compound in turmeric spice. Previous lab research has suggested it can fight inflammation and so-called oxidative damage to body cells. Those two processes are thought to feed a range of diseases, including type 2 diabetes.

Dense Breasts

A National Cancer Institute study tracked more than 9,000 breast cancer patients and concluded those with very dense breasts were no more likely to die than similar patients whose breasts weren't as dense. Density tends to decrease with age. Half of women younger than 50 and a third older than 50 are estimated to have dense breasts.

Mammograms can show if your breasts are made up mostly of dense tissue -- milk-producing and connective tissue -- or of fatty tissue. Fatty tissue appears dark on the X-ray. Dense tissue appears white. So do potentially cancerous spots, meaning they can blend in.

Blood Type and Heart Disease

A study published found that people with blood types A, B, or AB have a slightly higher risk of heart disease than people type O. About 90,000 men and women were included in the study; 4,070 people developed heart disease. Having type A blood increased risk by 8 percent, type B by 11 percent, and type

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AB by 20 percent. The research did not look at how blood type affects heart disease risk. The findings don't change the advice to stop smoking, lower cholesterol and blood pressure, eat a healthy diet and exercise daily.

Recipes

Polenta

Ingredients: 2 cups polenta (corn meal); about 4 1/4 cups water or vegetable broth; 1/2 medium onion, diced small; 3 cloves garlic, minced; 3/4 tsp sea or kosher salt; 1/4 cup white wine; 2 tbsp good-quality olive oil, vegan margarine or butter, your choice; 2 Tbsp balsamic vinegar; 1/2 tsp oregano; 1/2 cup sliced black olives (use Kalamata or another gourmet olive); 1/2 cup drained sun-dried tomato OR roasted red peppers, chopped small; 1/2 tsp pepper (or to taste); oil for pan-frying

Preparation: Combine polenta, onion, garlic, salt and water or vegetable broth in a large pot. Note: You may also choose to use a combination of water and vegetable broth when making polenta. Also, when choosing a pot, keep in mind that the polenta will expand as it cooks. Bring water or vegetable broth to a boil, then reduce it to a simmer. Heat the polenta, stirring often, about 25 minutes, until polenta is cooked, soft and fluffy. You may find that you need to add a bit more liquid as you go along. Stir in balsamic vinegar, olive oil, wine and oregano and heat, stirring occasionally, for another 5 minutes. Quickly stir in olives and sun-dried tomatoes (or roasted red peppers), pepper and adjust seasonings to taste. Spread cooked polenta in a lightly greased casserole dish or baking tray and refrigerate until cooled, about 2 hours. Once polenta is firm, slice about 3/4 inch thick and pan-fry in a bit of oil. This gourmet polenta is absolutely delicious just as it is, but you could also serve it topped with a balsamic-based tomato sauce, a caponata, or a grated hard cheese such as fresh Parmesan or Romano. These little fried polenta sticks can serve as either an entree or an appetizer for a gourmet vegetarian meal. Try them in larger slices (yet still about 3/4 inch thick) for a main dish. <http://vegetarian.about.com/od/maindishmentreerrecipes/r/Gourmet-Vegetarian-Polenta.htm?nl=1>

Rice, black bean and vegetable soup recipe

Ingredients: 2 Tbsp olive oil; 1 package vegetarian Italian sausages, cut into 1-inch pieces; 1 1/2 tsp cumin; 1/4 tsp fresh ground black pepper; 4 cups vegetable broth (or a combination of vegetable broth and water may be used); 1 15-ounce can black beans, drained and rinsed; 1 15-ounce can corn, drained; 1 14-1/2

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ounce can diced tomatoes, drained; 1 ½ cups zucchini strips, cut into 1-inch pieces; 2 tablespoons canned chopped chilies; Cooked brown rice or pasta; fresh grated Parmesan cheese for garnish (optional)
Preparation: In Dutch oven, over medium heat, place olive oil. Add sausage pieces; cook and stir over medium heat for 5 minutes. Remove sausage from pan. In same pan, add cumin and pepper; cook and stir 1 minute. Add vegetable broth, black beans, corn, diced tomatoes, and chilies. Cover mixture; bring to a boil (5 to 6 minutes). Add sausage and zucchini. Continue cooking, stirring occasionally, 2 to 3 minutes or until heated through. Serve soup in bowls over rice or pasta and sprinkle with Parmesan cheese.
<http://vegetarian.about.com/od/soupsstewsandchili/r/Rice-And-Vegetable-Soup.htm?nl=1>

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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!)

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