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## **EVOO – A Few Health Questions Answered:**

By Micheal CASTALDO - Founder of the New York City Olive Oil Coop

EVOO has always been placed somewhere between food and medicine. Hippocrates, the father of modern medicine, recommended the juices of fresh olives as a cure for mental illness and ulcers. With recent studies showing a possible link between EVOO consumption and reduced coronary heart disease, Micheal CASTALDO, Founder of the New York City Olive Oil Coop, is seeking to educate the public via his Olive Oil Tastings about the benefits of using high quality estate grown organic EVOO in ones diet.

**Can Eating Extra Virgin Olive Oil (EVOO) And Cooked Vegetables Reduce The Risk Of Developing Rheumatoid Arthritis?** “Yes. Research has shown that Rheumatoid arthritis is a chronic inflammatory disease of the joints. Its cause is unknown, but genes, infectious agents, hormones, and diet have been suggested as possible causes. Some reports have suggested that fish oil and vegetable oil in the diet may help relieve arthritis symptoms, but research has not confirmed that these foods have a protective effect. New studies suggest that EVOO and cooked vegetables may, in fact, reduce arthritis risk. Investigators found that people who consumed the least amount of EVOO were 2.5 times more likely to develop rheumatoid arthritis than those who consumed the most EVOO.”

**If Women Increase Their Monounsaturated Fat Intake By Replacing Oils That Are Higher In Polyunsaturated Fat, Reduce Their Risk Of Breast Cancer?** “Yes. A study published in *The Archives of Internal Medicine* (*Archives of Internal Medicine* 1998; 158: 41-45) found that women with a higher consumption of monounsaturated fat had a lesser chance of developing breast cancer. The study, conducted at the Karolinska Institute in Stockholm, Sweden, followed over 60,000 women and found that those with the highest proportion of fat intake from monounsaturated fat in their diet were associated with a lower risk of breast cancer. Researchers suggested that women can increase their monounsaturated fat intake by replacing oils that are higher in polyunsaturated fat with oils that are rich in monounsaturated fat, such as EVOO.”

**Can EVOO Help Prevent Calcium Loss?** “Yes. EVOO has a balanced polyunsaturated composition with a linoleic/linolenic acid ratio similar to that found in human milk. It’s an adequate source of essential fatty acids that cannot be synthesized by the human body and therefore have to be supplied through a diet. These factors make EVOO highly suitable for breast-fed and weaned infants. It is also highly recommended for the elderly because it is palatable and digestible and aids in the assimilation of minerals and vitamins. It stimulates bone mineralization, thus preventing calcium loss.”

**Is It True That EVOO Has Protective Benefits Against Bowel Cancer?** “Yes. Doctors found that EVOO reacts with acid in the stomach to prevent the onset of bowel and rectum cancers. Research carried out in Spain on rats in 1999 also suggests that EVOO could protect against the disease. Research shows that three dietary factors could affect a person's risks of developing the disease. They suggested that people who ate a lot of meat and fish, as opposed to those who ate mostly vegetables and cereals, were at increased risk. They also found that a diet rich in EVOO was associated with a decreased risk. Oxford researchers found the EVOO seemed to reduce the amount of bile acid and to increase DAO levels (an enzyme called diamine oxidase), thus protecting against abnormal cell growth and cancer. Researchers found that B-sitosterol (a plant-based fat found in vegetable fats such as EVOO) enhances an intracellular signaling system that tells cells not to divide.