

CALCULATING GLYCAEMIC INDEX

A working group of parties currently involved with the determination of the glycaemic index (GI) of foods in South Africa was recently established. The purpose of the working group was to discuss the setting of a defined methodology for the determination of the GI and to ensure standardisation of GI testing in South Africa.

The working group acknowledges that internationally significant scientific disagreement exists over the extent of the physiological benefit, the methodology used to determine the GI and the usefulness of using the GI as a public health strategy. The purpose of this meeting was to establish a new scientifically accepted and standardised method for GI calculation in order to end the current haphazard and non-comparable GI values that exist in South Africa. This new science-based methodology will ensure that all future results generated in South Africa will be comparable and will comply with stringent scientific principles. It is also clear that all results and GI values currently used in South Africa need to be used with caution and only after a detailed evaluation of the methodology used. The new methodology will shortly be made available for comment.

The working group includes Ms J Badham of JB Consultancy (facilitator), Mrs A Booyzen and Mrs L Esterhuizen of the Directorate of Food Control, Mr J Delpport and Mrs L Delpport of the Glycaemic Index Foundation of South Africa, Prof J Jerling, Prof C Venter and Prof E Vorster of Potchefstroom University, Mrs M Visser of the University of Cape Town, Prof M Slabber of the University of the Free State and Ms G Gericke of the University of Pretoria.

For more information contact Jane Badham, JB Consultancy, tel (011) 463-0679, cell 082 562-7755.

EICOSAPENTAENOIC ACID (EPA) AND WEIGHT LOSS IN CANCER

A new nutritional product, ProSure, developed by Abbott Laboratories, has

been reported to help slow and/or reverse weight loss in people with advanced cancer (*Gut* 2003; 52: 1479-1486).

The international study was led by Professor Kenneth Fearon, Department of Clinical and Surgical Sciences, Royal Infirmary, Edinburgh, Scotland. The authors conclude that 'post-hoc dose response analysis suggests that, if taken in sufficient quantity, only the n-3 fatty acid enriched energy and protein dense supplement results in net gain of weight, lean tissue, and improved quality of life'.

For further information please contact Ms Sarah Newton, tel (011) 858-2044 or Dr Bhadrish Vallabh, tel (011) 858-2030.

SECOND ANNOUNCEMENT: INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS OF NUTRITION

The 18th International Congress of Nutrition of the IUNS, 'Nutrition Safari for Innovative Solutions' will take place at the International Convention Centre in Durban, South Africa, from 19 to 23 September 2005, with pre-congress nutrition safaris on 17 and 18 September 2005 at selected venues throughout southern Africa (the latter depending on availability of sponsorship).

For further information on the congress and pre-congress safaris please access our web site at www.puk.ac.za/iuns

In addition to creating a platform for dialogue on the newest developments in nutrition science — research, policy, practice — the congress will focus on innovative solutions for global nutrition problems and will aim to build capacity among 'young' nutritionists, including nutrition scientists, public health nutritionists, clinical nutritionists, dietitians, food scientists, food service managers, etc. The congress will be of interest to all nutritionists, and people with an interest in nutrition, world-wide.

The local organising committee plans to send the call for abstracts and registration out early in 2004 to provide sufficient time for all delegates to prepare for the congress.

Please e-mail us at safari@puk.ac.za if you are interested in receiving further communication about the congress,

providing details as follows: title, name(s) and surname; affiliated institution; e-mail address; postal address; main area of interest (only one).

FEEDBACK FROM THE PROFESSIONAL BOARD FOR DIETETICS

Election of new board members

I trust that by now you have all voted for the new professional board members. Good luck to the new committee.

Community service dietitians

The first year of compulsory community service has come to an end and judging from the feedback received, the overall feeling is that of a positive and worthwhile experience. Those dietitians who have completed their community service must please ensure that they receive a completed and signed Form 27 Comm Service: Certificate of completion of community service by practitioners from their employer. This form must be submitted to the HPCSA, PO Box 205, Pretoria, 0001 as soon as possible. Upon receipt of this form, the HPCSA will register them as dietitians in the category 'Independent Practice'.

IMPORTANT: For those of you planning to spend some time overseas, please ensure that you pay your 2004 annual fees and familiarise yourselves with the CPD guidelines before leaving the country. If you fail to pay annual fees, your name will be removed from the register and a hefty penalty (10 times annual fees plus outstanding fees) will be charged when you apply to restore your name to the register again.

Dual registration of practitioners

A health care practitioner who has dual registration must adhere to the CPD requirements of each of the professional boards that he/she is registered with to maintain his/her registration status.

Policy on undesirable business practice

This policy has now been finalised and adopted by the HPCSA Council. It is available from the HPCSA website

(www.hpcsa.co.za). Please ensure that you are practising within the scope of the law. A 6-month (October 2003 - March 2004) period has been allowed for those individuals who need to disengage themselves from undesirable practices.

From myself and all the members of the Professional Board for Dietetics a big thank you for your support during the 5 years of our term of office. All the best for the future.

Kind regards

Dr Renée Blaauw

Chairperson: Professional Board for Dietetics

SASPEN's CORNER

Greetings to all SASPEN members. This SASPEN communication will become a regular feature in the journal. Through this source the committee will inform you of matters of interest, important SASPEN information, and general news. We will however still make use of e-mail, snail mail, etc.

Welcome

To the new SASPEN executive committee for the period 2004/2005:

Dr R Blaauw (President); Prof D Labadarios (Vice President); Mrs T L Moore (Treasurer); Prof A Haffejee (Scientific Secretary); Mrs J Visser; Dr L Michell; Dr N Steyn; Mr A Rasekhala and Mr R Kennedy.

Annual fees

The deadline for 2004 annual payment is 31 January 2004. Renewal forms are inserted in this issue of the journal.

Electronic media / website

We envisage using the electronic media much more in the future. We are investigating a password-protected system for the website, where certain information can only be downloaded if you are a paid-up member. You will receive your password together with the receipt of payment of your 2004 annual fees.

Many of our members do not have the time to visit the website regularly, nor do they have access. So, in future, we will inform you via e-mail or through this

column when the website has been updated or information added.

Members without website access will be able to request hard copies of the articles/information from the secretariat, by means of a self-addressed pre-paid envelope. More about this later.

Academic programme

SASPEN will be participating in the International Nutrition Congress 2005 to be held in Durban, and as such will not present a separate congress in that year. Plans are afoot to run regular academic programmes over the next 18 months. For 2004, the provisional dates are March and September. Watch this space.

CPD

The correct answers to the first 2 CPD activities (articles) that appeared in the SAJCN this past year will be placed on the website (www.saspen.co.za) during December 2003.

Regards

Tracey Moore