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Seafood Nutrition Partnership Announces Results of Pilot Program: Increased Seafood Consumption Helps to Reduce Women's Heart Disease Risks

Eating Heart Healthy Program Helps Participants Learn Beneficial Diet Habits

ARLINGTON, VA – Seafood Nutrition Partnership announced the initial findings from Eating Heart Healthy, a pilot program designed to help women understand and mitigate their risk of heart disease through a seafood-rich diet: 92% of participants were shown to have lowered their risk of sudden cardiac death.

At the launch of the Boston-based pilot program in June 2014, participants were medically tested for baseline levels of Omega-3, an important supporting nutrient for heart health, found primarily in fish and seafood. Participants were re-tested for Omega-3 levels in October 2014, following three months of implementing a heart-healthy diet rich in seafood. The post-program measurement revealed that more than 9 in 10 women participating in the program had improved their Omega-3 Index, and nearly 6 in 10 had moved into a lower cardiac risk quadrant, based on a scale developed by OmegaQuant and outlined in a study by CM Albert, et al, published in 2002 in the *New England Journal of Medicine* (NEJM).

The Eating Heart Healthy pilot program is being conducted by Seafood Nutrition Partnership, a national non-profit advocating a seafood-rich diet to help address America's public health crisis, in partnership with Brigham & Women's Hospital (BWH), a major teaching hospital of Harvard Medical School; and Roxbury Tenants of Harvard (RTH), an affordable-housing community for low- and moderate-income families. Over a period of four weeks, female RTH residents participated in heart-health talks and cooking demonstrations. Equipped with newfound heart-health knowledge, participants came away with recipes to feed a family of four for \$10 per meal; sample Omega-3 capsules; and follow-up informational support via text, newsletter and social media.

The objective of the Eating Heart Healthy program is to help women learn to incorporate healthy fats and nutrient-dense foods into daily meals, with the goal of increasing awareness of heart health and lowering their risk for cardiovascular disease (CVD), the leading cause of death for women in the United States, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. While the U.S. Department of Agriculture and Department of Health and Human Services' dietary guidelines recommend that Americans eat seafood twice per week—a level shown to reduce risks of dying from CVD by 36%, according the *Journal of the American Medical Association*—only 20% of Americans currently consume seafood at this level.

Dr. JoAnne Foody, medical director for both the Pollin Cardiovascular Wellness Center at BWH and the Eating Heart Healthy program, said, "Following a Mediterranean diet rich in seafood can reduce the risk of dying from heart disease by 30 to 50 percent. The initial outcomes of our program have borne this out."

"The results achieved by the first Eating Heart Healthy cohort are clinically significant," added Dr. William Harris, president of OmegaQuant, maker of the Omega-3 Index test. "They have shown that having knowledge of baseline Omega-3 levels is a good motivator towards increased seafood consumption."

RTH Executive Director Karen Gately stated, "I am impressed with the health improvements achieved over a short period of time and look forward to sustaining these results with our Eating Heart Healthy partners."

"We are excited to bring, within a clinical setting, a wealth of seafood nutrition knowledge to people who need it most," said Linda Cornish, executive director of Seafood Nutrition Partnership. "The program demonstrates that adding seafood to one's diet can be a simple, affordable and enjoyable way to help prevent chronic diseases."



Ms. Cornish continued, “We couldn’t have achieved the success of our pilot program without our in-kind donors: Hyatt Regency Boston, which donated the time of Chef Kelly Armetta, who led our cooking sessions; Stavis Seafoods, which donated flash-frozen seafood; American Marine Ingredients, which provided samples of 54 Degrees North Omega-3 capsules; and Colavita, which provided olive oil.”

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About Seafood Nutrition Partnership

Seafood Nutrition Partnership (SNP) is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization whose mission is to inspire a healthier America through partnerships that raise awareness about the essential nutritional benefits of eating seafood. Through its education efforts, the organization aims to help Americans gain the skills to select, order and prepare fish and shellfish, and to inspire a healthier America by promoting a nutrient-rich diet that includes seafood. SNP is a member of the Clinton Global Initiative and the NCD Roundtable. More information is available at SeafoodNutrition.org.