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## Boost benefits of broccoli with spice

September 29, 2011

A University professor is cooking up a recipe for fighting cancer.

A new study suggests that eating steamed fresh broccoli paired with a spicy food that contains the enzyme myrosinase, like horseradish, can help reduce one's chances of developing cancer.

Eating these foods together also ensures that absorption takes place in the upper level of the digestive system.

"Therefore, people can get the maximum benefit for their health," said Elizabeth Jeffery, University professor of nutritional science. Jeffery said in order to maximize broccoli's benefits, she advises people to spice the broccoli with broccoli sprouts, wasabi, and mustard.

"Even (if) the broccoli is over-cooked, you can still boost its benefits by pairing it with another food that contains myrosinase," she added.

Jeffery has been conducting research on broccoli for nearly 20 years. In her experiments, she uses mice as her testing subjects.

The recent study consisted of the subjects consuming broccoli sprouts and broccoli powder and also, the two together. Results showed that subjects who ate the foods together were able to attain higher measurements of bioactive compounds in their blood than when either was eaten alone.

Urine samples corroborated the blood results, said Jenna Cramer, lead author of the study.

Though the powder itself does not contain myrosinase, it does contain the agent sulforaphane, the vegetable's cancer-preventive component. Both foods contain this compound.

Together, the sprouts were able to lend their myrosinase to the powder.

"I never thought about (how) broccoli (could) have cancer-fighting power before," said Zuhui An, a graduate student in Media. "Sometimes I just eat them for lunch. My mother cooks them boiled with sauce."

An said she would like for more people to know the health benefits behind adding these spicy foods to their diets containing broccoli.

"Spicier, the better," she said. "That means it's being effective."

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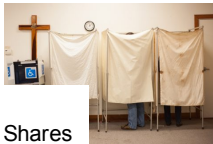
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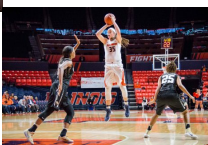
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