

# NUTRITION NEWS

## Nutrient Found In Tomatoes May Reduce Prostate Cancer Risk

(NAPSA)—Higher intake of the nutrient lycopene, found in tomatoes, has been associated with a reduced risk of prostate cancer. A new observational study funded by the National Cancer Institute found an inverse relationship between the blood levels of lycopene and risk for the disease.

The research showed that men with highest serum levels of lycopene—a measure of the amount of the nutrient absorbed from the diet—had a 35 percent reduction in risk of prostate cancer. An even stronger association was seen in men with aggressive prostate cancer; those men with the lowest serum levels of lycopene had a 63 percent greater chance of aggressive disease than those with the highest serum levels.

The study also highlighted differences in lycopene blood levels between white men and African-American men. Prostate cancer incidence is twice as high among African-American men, when compared with whites. Researchers identified that serum lycopene levels were 18 percent lower among African-American men than white men, which may help explain the racial disparity in incidence of the disease.

According to an analysis of a government intake survey, half of the U.S. population is getting 3.6 mg of lycopene or less per day. Intake levels associated with the highest protection from prostate cancer are 6.5 mg/day or more, which can be achieved with 10 or



**Reduced risk for prostate cancer has been linked with lycopene, a nutrient found in tomatoes.**

more servings of tomatoes or tomato-based products per week.

Across the U.S., prostate cancer is the second-leading cancer killer. Approximately 189,000 new cases of prostate cancer will be diagnosed and approximately 30,000 men will die from prostate cancer this year, more than 20 percent of whom may be African American.

To help reduce your risk of prostate cancer, speak with your doctor about ways to reduce the risk of developing the disease. In addition, the American Cancer Society recommends annual check-ups for men aged 40 and older. Scientists have also shown that increased lycopene intake leads to a rise in serum lycopene levels, so one simple change would be to eat more lycopene-rich foods such as tomato juice, sauce and soup or by adding lycopene supplements to your diet.