

Turning DASH Strategy into Reality for Improved Cardio Wellness Outcomes: Part II

By Shawn J. Green, PhD, Co-founder, Berkeley Test | July 25, 2013

As part of their health & wellness program, the largest health insurer sent me a refrigerator magnet highlighting the National Institutes of Health's (NIH) Dietary Approach to Stop Hypertension Diet (DASH). In their accompanying letter, the company stated that the refrigerator magnet is a "tool to help you manage your blood pressure."

The DASH Eating Plan refrigerator magnet was a nice gesture to remind clients to consume less sodium and incorporate more vegetables and fruits into their diet to lower blood pressure. However, is this the most effective wellness tool to engage and motivate individuals to change their eating habits?

As we learned in [last week's post](#), plant-based diets – especially those rich in leafy greens, such as spinach and arugula – elevate cardio-protective nitric oxide. For many pre-hypertensive individuals, staying with a plant-based diet is a critical driver to prevent elevated blood pressure and the diseases associated with hypertension.

Yet many Americans continue to fall far short of eating recommended daily servings of vegetables that elevate natural nitric oxide levels in our body.

A new model is needed to drive behavioral change. So how do we consistently integrate cardio-protective plant-based diets into our daily dietary lifestyle?

Berkeley Test may be a start.

Berkeley Test's Saliva Nitric Oxide Test Strips and its iPhone Cardio Diet Tracker are designed to break bad habits and empower folks from various walks of life to incorporate plant-based foods into their daily diets. These engaging tools provide a model to influence dietary change on a personal level that supports lasting compliance with measurable outcomes.

Designed to detect nitric oxide status in the body throughout the day, Berkeley Test developed the next generation proprietary nitric oxide test strip; for less than 70-cents, an easy-to-use, 1-minute saliva test strip enables consumers to make immediate and real-time dietary lifestyle adjustments.

Once users finish the strip test, they can use Berkeley Test's Cardio Diet Tracker App to compare their results to a color-coded indicator showing whether nitric oxide levels are on target. After 2-3 hours, the user is alerted to check their nitric oxide status. Users can leverage the Cardio Diet Tracker App to more effectively adhere to plant-based diets by tracking nitric oxide status in conjunction with the type, frequency, and amount of nitric oxide-potent foods eaten to sustain their levels.

Michael Greger, M.D., of [NutritionFacts.org](https://www.nutritionfacts.org), suggests that Berkeley Test may offer hope by bringing plant-based foods into our dietary lifestyle in an engaging fashion. At the very least, it will remind us to eat our greens on a more frequent basis, he says.

Berkeley's strip-app bundled technologies demonstrate that self-assessing, analyzing, and fine-tuning wellness outcomes with a shared, open, interactive community can be a catalyst to sustain plant-based cardio-protective diets in our daily lifestyle. The value of Berkeley Test's model is not only demonstrated in how it equips consumers to make healthier dietary choices, but also in its ability to connect users by allowing them to share dietary successes with their Facebook friends. In today's society, wellness outcomes and fitness is highly social and valued.

Individuals – who range from Olympians seeking to boost their physical endurance to baby boomers looking for an easier way to eat healthfully and prevent high blood pressure – are embracing these innovations. As more people turn to Berkeley's strip and mobile App to improve adherence to plant-based diets, such as DASH and Ornish, natural communities of mutual support are growing. These networks offer a unique venue to share experiences, provide strategies for success and a forum to discuss common challenges, refine approaches and achieve desired outcomes.

A dynamically open community to share new knowledge about wellness and create a model for achieving and maintaining healthy living and eating is what we hope Berkeley's 'health biomarker' test strips (such as nitric oxide and mobile App combo) provides.

So, what is your nitric oxide level, today?

To read this post on RWHC Blog, [click here](#).