

THU Aug 28, 2014 Updated: 2:56pm



[LIFESTYLE](#) | [HEALTH](#) | [HEALTH](#)

Those with a low platelet count benefit from a healthy diet

Certain foods such as leafy green vegetables could be just what the doctor ordered

Sunory Dutt
life@scmp.com

PUBLISHED : Monday, 13 May, 2013, 12:00am

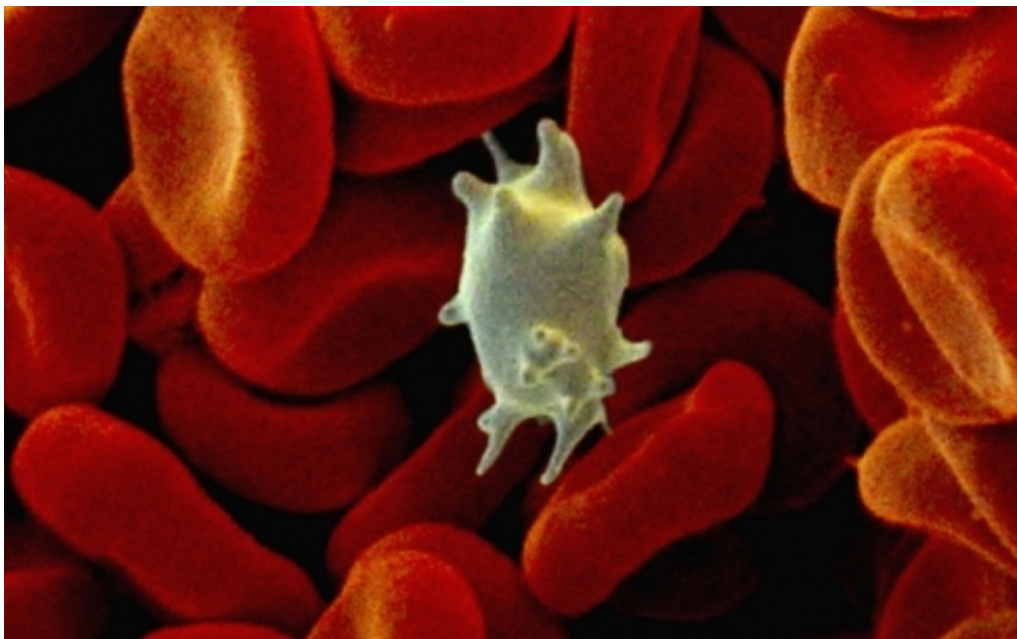
UPDATED : Monday, 13 May, 2013, 10:07am

Most Popular

VIEWED

SHARED

COMMENTED



A platelet among human blood cells. Platelets enable the blood to clot. Photo: Corbis

Thrombocytes or platelets are colourless blood cells that assist in blood clotting by forming plugs in blood vessel holes. A healthy person has between 150,000 to 400,000 platelets per microlitre of blood.

However, chemotherapy, radiotherapy, dengue fever, chronic hepatitis, viral infection or imbalances in the immune system can cause a sub-normal platelet count.

The telltale signs of thrombocytopenia are easy or excessive bruising, superficial bleeding into the skin that appears as a reddish-purple rash, prolonged bleeding from cuts, spontaneous bleeding from the gums or nose, blood in urine or stools, or profuse bleeding during surgery or after dental work.

"When people develop low platelets, it is often because the body develops an immune response to platelets. When this happens, we usually prescribe a steroid, which is an immune suppressant and anti-inflammatory medication. So theoretically, an anti-inflammatory diet should be helpful in supporting one's immune system," says Dr Sunita Mishra, medical director for Clinical Innovation and Care Delivery, Swedish Medical Group in Seattle, Washington.

SHARE

4



0

Email

Print

RELATED TOPICS

LIFE
Blood Clot
Diet

RELATED ARTICLES

China's first lady Peng Liyuan's fashion style has made her a global sensation

24 Aug 2014 - 9:39am

Outgoing Parsons dean Simon Collins will be sorely missed

Shanghai to San Francisco in 100 minutes by Chinese supersonic submarine

Meat-free in Hong Kong: City's best vegetarian and raw-food restaurants revealed

Thousands of Hongkongers join sex club to fulfil their X-rated fantasies

Street life: Hong Kong in the 1950s as seen through a teenage photographer's lens

Burning rubbish worse for us and the planet than thought, study shows

We recommend



NEWS

In new tack, Japanese police target teens selling sex, not their...

22 Aug 2014



NEWS

Beijing Zoo boss claims he made 8 million yuan fortune moonlighting...

21 Aug 2014



LIFESTYLE

Thousands of Hongkongers join sex club to fulfil their X-rated...

04 Aug 2014

However, Mishra says she isn't aware of any studies that have looked at the clinical response of using antioxidants and an anti-inflammatory diet to treat thrombocytopenia.

Since the average lifespan of each platelet is around 10 days, the body needs to constantly keep up the production of new platelets. These are made in the bone marrow.

The Platelet Disorder Support Association recommends a macrobiotic contractive diet that should include foods like leafy green vegetables rich in vitamin K which is essential for blood clotting and platelet creation.

Charmain Tan, registered dietitian at Seventeen Nutrition Consultants advises: "Green leafy vegetables such as broccoli, spinach, kale, Chinese vegetables like choi sum and kai lan are loaded with antioxidants and rich in vitamins and minerals which are believed to reduce inflammation and help increase platelet count. Beetroot juice is a potent antioxidant that helps fight against disease. Red guava is becoming noted for its role in improving platelets, and research is ongoing. Blueberries, blackberries and raspberries contain phytonutrients that help neutralise free radicals and aid in fighting low platelets."

But the Abramson Cancer Centre of the University of Pennsylvania cautions against eating raw vegetables when one's platelet count is low, as they may damage the intestinal lining. To ease digestion, steam vegetables until soft, or mix into baked dishes.

According to a study that appeared in the September 1999 issue of *The American Journal of Clinical Nutrition*, researchers found that antioxidants such as vitamin E and phytoestrogens found in whole grains appear to increase blood platelet levels by reducing the platelet-aggregating effects of the blood.

Raymond Chung, nutritionist at Albert Place Practice and Mineralysis recommends walnuts, cooked carrots and tomatoes, black sesame, squid, peanuts (especially skin-on), lean meats and milk for promoting platelet count

24 Aug 2014 - 9:39am

Artist Cai Guoqiang gets more bang for his bucks

23 Aug 2014 - 10:53pm

South Korean actor Song Kang-ho has big-screen staying power

23 Aug 2014 - 10:53pm

Postcard: Melbourne

23 Aug 2014 - 10:53pm

There has never been any data about specific foods being able to improve or boost a low platelet count

DR RACHNA T. SHROFF



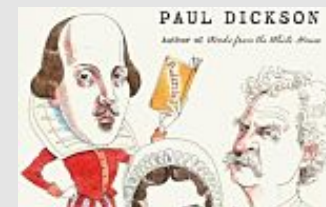
NEWS
'It's my fault': Jackie Chan tells of his shame at the drug arrest of...

21 Aug 2014



NEWS
Irish force foreign woman into caesarian birth at 25 weeks

18 Aug 2014



LIFESTYLE
Book review: Authorisms, by Paul Dickson

10 Aug 2014



LIFESTYLE
Postcard: Melbourne

23 Aug 2014



BUSINESS
Superpower weddings

02 Aug 2014



LIFESTYLE
Breakfast dining goes international in London

01 Aug 2014

count.

Sufficient intake of vitamin C and flavonoids from natural foods like lemon, broccoli, spinach, bell pepper and kiwi are also beneficial for low platelet counts. He also advises consuming the orange's white fibrous rind as it contains high levels of flavonoids, which improve blood vessel elasticity.

But Chung cautions that since a low platelet count has already predisposed a person towards bleeding, any foods (such as garlic and green tea) or nutritional supplements (such as Nattokinase or omega-3 fish oil) that suppresses platelet activity should be avoided.

He recommends telling your doctor of your condition to prevent them from prescribing certain medications or supplements that might further suppress platelet functions.

According to cancer nutrition expert Dr Kim Dalzell of the Midwestern Regional Medical Centre, sesame oil has properties that raise platelet levels. Papaya leaf extract could also help, according to a 2009 study from Malaysia's AIMST University.

When quizzed on the studies above Dr Rachna T. Shroff, assistant professor at the department of GI medical oncology in Houston, Texas, says: "These types of studies haven't truly been validated by multiple sources, so I'm uncertain about their efficacy. There has never been any data about specific foods being able to improve or boost a low platelet count. This is a question I get asked a lot, but nothing has been proven.

"There are no easy methods for increasing a platelet count," says Shroff. "Certain injections can be given to counteract chemotherapy effects on red blood cells and white blood cells, but not platelets.

"Certain chemotherapies do, however, lower platelet counts by increasing venous pressures in the liver circulation. Given that the spleen's natural job is to dispose of old blood cells, sometimes an effect of an enlarging spleen is what is called hypersplenism, where the spleen's activity diminishes the platelet counts.

"In this setting, we might consider a splenic embolisation, where the blood supply to the spleen is decreased, thereby causing less hypersplenism and improved platelet counts."



BUSINESS

Which one fits: Hongkonger or Chinese?

25 Aug 2014



PROPERTY

For sale: HK\$819m house on Hong Kong's Peak is world's most expensive...

07 Aug 2014



PROPERTY

Mainland China towers scraping the sky in a green and modern way

30 Jul 2014



COMMENT

Push Up Drink was bound to be a bust with its breast boosting claim

15 Aug 2014



COMMENT

China's real problem: leftover men

06 Aug 2014



COMMENT

How Hong Kong could be a better city

19 Aug 2014

This article appeared in the South China Morning Post print edition as *Got enough on your platelets?*

For unlimited access to:

SCMP.com

SCMP Tablet Edition

SCMP Mobile Edition

10-year news archive

Subscribe now

Existing subscribers, [login here](#)

FROM SCMP (LAST 24HRS)



PROPERTY
Chinese developers sinking into



PROPERTY
Riskiest London offices lure investors as rents soar
27 AUG 2014



LIFESTYLE
Danish architects take

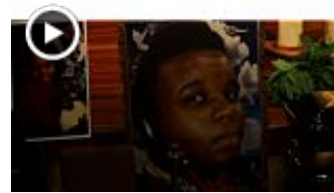


PROPERTY
Shui On Land buys remaining stake in Foshan development project
27 AUG 2014



PROPERTY
Evergrande Real Estate speeds up push into new

MULTIMEDIA



WORLD Al Sharpton eulogises Michael Brown during funeral

26 Aug 2014



WORLD Jeb Bush mulling 2016 presidential run

26 Aug 2014



WORLD Unseen footage of Tiananmen Square attack caught on CCTV

24 Aug 2014



HONG KONG Hong Kong snake catcher filmed abusing snake

12 Aug 2014



ASIA 'I like to show off': Chinese celebrity Gao Meimei confesses to...

04 Aug 2014

FROM AROUND THE WEB



BBC Can a film be banned in the US?

27 Jun 2014



BBC The best time to go out for dinner

16 Jul 2014



YOUTUBE PayPal Authentic Buyer Stories: Randy

09 Jul 2014



YOUTUBE See Why Velda Shops Only With Paypal

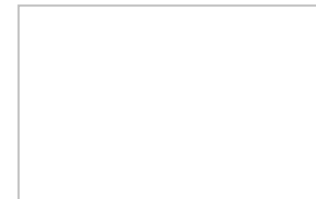
09 Jul 2014



REVIEWED: LATEST ARTICLES Scientists Defy Physics, Make No-Freeze Ice Cream

24 Jul 2014

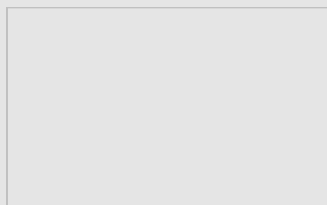
Promotions



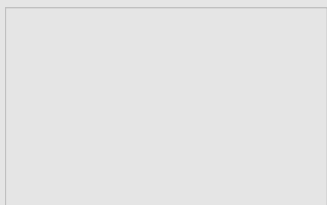
48 Hours giveaway – Ice Hockey training course

Recommended by

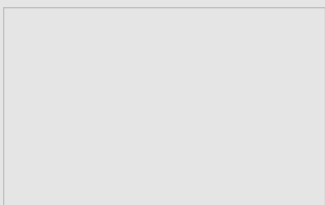
In Case You Missed It



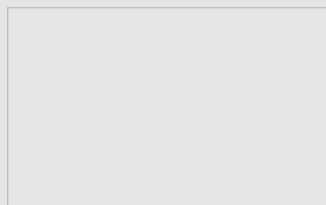
In the eye of the storm: How deadly typhoons have changed the face of Hong Kong



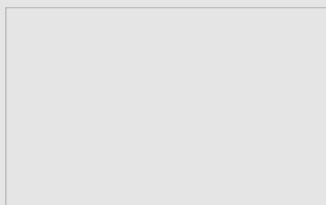
Chic Chat with Hugh Jackman



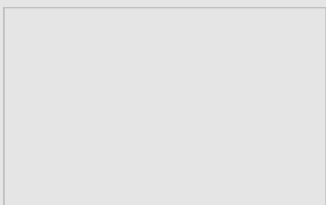
The forgotten army of the first world war: How Chinese labourers helped shape Europe



INFOGRAPHIC: Why China is the real winner at the World Cup



Multimedia: Edward Snowden in Hong Kong



Voices from Tiananmen: Eyewitnesses look back to the spring of 1989

Sections

Hong Kong News
Asia News
China News
China Insider
China Digest
World News
Business
Money
Comment
Insight & Opinion
Blogs
Lifestyle

Technology
Sport
Property
Photos
Video
Magazines
Post Magazine
Style
Money
Good Eating
Faces
48 Hours

Racing Post
Young Post
南华早报中文网
Weather
Most popular
Homepage Time Machine
7 Day Index
Crossword
Sudoku
Bridge Puzzle
Promotions
Special Reports

Subscriptions

South China Morning Post
SCMP.com
Corporate subscriptions

Find a Job
Career Centre

Find a course
Featured Institutions
The MBA Centre

Services

SCMP Mobile Edition
SCMP Tablet Edition
SCMP ePaper Edition
Buy SCMP Photos
Copyright Licensing
10-Year News Archive

Find a Job
Catering, Hotel & Tourism
Retail

Directories

At Your Service
Business Services
HK Restaurant Directory
Mice Biz

Advertising Opportunities

Hong Kong Rate Card
Overseas Rate Card
China Rate Card
The Marketer

Events

SCMP Events
Operation Santa Claus
Homes For Hope

Magazines

Cosmopolitan
CosmoGIRL!
Elle
Harpers Bazaar

Connect with Us

SCMP on Facebook
SCMP on Twitter
Newsletters
RSS

The Directory
LuxeHomes

SCMP Marketing Solutions
Recruitment Advertising
SCMP Outdoor Media

HK Magazine
The List
Destination Macau

RSS

Copyright © 2014 South China Morning Post Publishers Ltd. All rights reserved.

[SCMP Group](#)

[Privacy Policy](#)

[FAQs](#)

[Terms & Conditions](#)

[Work For Us](#)

[Contact Us](#)