

## THE BEST OF THE BEST, SHOWCASING ACT'S OUTSTANDING HEALTH AND MEDICAL SCIENTISTS

### Live longer, reduce your inflammation

It has been a long held belief that reduced stress and lower cardiovascular disease risk are the health benefits of eating a Mediterranean styled diet. Research has revealed that the regular consumption of whole-grain cereals, legumes, fish, fruits, vegetables and olive oil with moderate poultry and wine intake together with very limited red and processed meat consumption associated with the Mediterranean may also reduce inflammation . and thus, lead to further protection against chronic diseases.

Using data collected during a ten year follow-up of a large observational prospective study, Ekavi Georgousopoulou from Harokopio University, Athens, under the supervision of Professor Demosthenes Panagiotakos together with collaborators including Duane Mellor, Nenad Naumovski and Jackson Thomas from the University of Canberra, showed that people who adhered more to a Mediterranean diet had a direct and considerable reduction in their levels of inflammation. High inflammation is linked to many chronic diseases such as asthma, bowel disease and arthritis. The study also confirmed the direct benefits of this diet on cardiovascular health, in addition to the risk factors regulation . Ekavi's work suggests that sticking to a healthy Mediterranean diet, which is easy and low-cost to adopt, has the potential to be a useful lifestyle choice and could improve the quality of life.

### Wire guiding our thoughts

Artificially wiring up the brain to repair damage is the stuff of science fiction. But this idea might not be as crazy as it sounds, thanks to the work of medical researcher Vini Gautam.

Vini is working at John Curtin School of Medical Research, ANU. Using state-of-the-art nanowires Vini has grown hippocampal cells, the cells responsible for developing long term memories, from the brains of rats. Nanowire guides the hippocampal cells so that they grow into fully functioning neuronal networks developing connections capable of regenerating the region of the brain damaged as a result of trauma or chronic disease such as dementia.

These results hold realistic possibilities for developing implants that could promote regeneration of brain circuits after damage due to injury.

Interview and photo opportunities

Contact: Sharon Pok 0423 338 029 or Catherine West 0415 928 211