

the incidence of common STIs. Dickson and colleagues' study supports these findings. Circumcision in early childhood had no protective effect against STIs in a cohort of men born in Dunedin, New Zealand, who were followed from birth to age 32 years.

The authors analyzed prospective data from 499 sexually experienced men who participated in the Dunedin Multidisciplinary Health and Development study, 210 of whom were circumcised before the age of 3 years. All men completed computer-presented questionnaires on sexual behavior and experience of STIs at 21, 26 and 32 years of age. Overall, 117 men reported having had an STI (none was HIV) before the age of 32 years. There was no difference in the proportion of circumcised and uncircumcised men who reported an STI (23.4% versus 23.5%). Individual STIs also had very similar incidences in circumcised and uncircumcised men. Adjustment for socioeconomic factors and sexual behavior made no difference to these findings.

The authors note that their use of computerized presentation of validated questions on sexual behavior, with appropriate safeguards to protect participants' confidentiality, should have promoted disclosure of such information.

Original article Dickson NP *et al.* (2008) Circumcision and risk of sexually transmitted infections in a birth cohort. *J Pediatr* 152: 383–387

High folate intake is associated with reduced frequency of sperm aneuploidy

Mechanisms of sperm aneuploidy (an abnormal chromosome number in male gametes) are not fully understood. In particular, the effects of nutrition on sperm aneuploidy have not been investigated in humans, although *in vitro* and animal studies have suggested that micronutrients, such as folate, zinc and antioxidants, have a role in spermatogenesis. Young and colleagues studied the effects of dietary and supplemental intake of these micronutrients on the frequency of human sperm aneuploidy.

The study included healthy, nonsmoking men who were enrolled in the AGES study (Age and Genetic Damage in Sperm). Daily nutrient intake was estimated by the 100-item Modified Block Food Frequency Questionnaire, and participants also provided a semen sample for analysis.

The 89 eligible men were predominantly white (91%), with a mean age of 44.7 ± 15.1 years. Men in the highest quartile of total folate intake had significantly lower frequencies of disomy X, disomy 21 and sex nullisomy, and a significantly lower overall frequency of sperm aneuploidy compared with men with low folate intake. There was also a significant inverse correlation between total folate intake and overall frequency of sperm aneuploidy. Zinc and antioxidant intake did not show consistent, statistically significant associations with aneuploidy frequency.

The authors conclude that high folate intake is associated with reduced frequency of sperm aneuploidy. These results are consistent with the abnormal meiotic chromosome segregation reported in women with impaired folate metabolism.

Original article Young SS *et al.* (2008) The association of folate, zinc and antioxidant intake with sperm aneuploidy in healthy non-smoking men. *Human Reprod* 23: 1014–1022

A new 3D imaging technique for prostate examination

A new prostate imaging system for the detection of prostate cancer has been evaluated by Weiss and colleagues. Prostate mechanical imaging (PMI; Artann Laboratories, Trenton, NJ) is accomplished by means of a transrectal probe fitted with pressure sensor arrays and a 3D orientation sensor. The pressure sensor array in the head of the probe evaluates spatial distribution of tissue hardness by measuring changes in pressure pattern in response to palpation of the prostate. The technique permits real-time, cross-sectional imaging of the prostate and produces 3D reconstructed elasticity images of the gland.

The study enrolled 168 men, in whom PMI was compared with standard digital rectal examination (DRE). PMI provided prostate image reconstruction in 141 patients (84%); reasons for inadequate data acquisition included anatomical limitations and application of insufficient pressure to the gland. PMI estimates of prostate size correlated with size as assessed by DRE. Receiver Operating Characteristic analysis indicated 81% agreement between PMI and DRE for the detection of prostate nodules. Biopsies performed on 21 patients with abnormal DRE findings or