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**SCIENTIFIC EVIDENCE CONTINUES TO SUPPORT EGGS' ROLE IN A HEALTHY DIET. NEW STUDY SHOULD NOT
IMPACT DIETARY HABITS**

Park Ridge, Ill. (April 25, 2013) – Eggs have been shown to have a wide range of health benefits, providing 13 essential vitamins and minerals, high-quality protein and antioxidants, all for just 70 calories. Years of credible research has demonstrated the positive effects of the high-quality protein and nutrients in eggs, including choline, on satiety, weight management, eye health and in supporting a healthy pregnancy. Additionally, the 2010 Dietary Guidelines for Americans recognize eggs as a nutrient-dense food that can be part of a healthful diet.

The *New England Journal of Medicine* recently published a study examining the connection between choline, trimethylamine-N-oxide (TMAO) (a compound produced by bacteria in the large intestine), and the effects of TMAO on the body.¹ While it is important to understand the relationship between the nutrients found in foods we eat and how our gut processes them, this singular study does not provide enough evidence to support a change in a healthy diet that includes choline-containing foods such as eggs. In fact, study findings are surprising and contradict more than 40 years of research demonstrating that healthy adults can enjoy eggs, which contain choline, without significantly impacting their risk of heart disease.

“Study authors note that choline is a semi-essential nutrient and should not be eliminated in the diet. Choline is essential for life’s most basic functions, such as normal cell activity, liver function and transporting nutrients throughout the body,” says (Expert TBD). “This study contradicts years of research surrounding the benefits of choline found in eggs and other foods like fish, cauliflower and Brussels sprouts, none of which have been linked to heart disease risk.”

The *New England Journal of Medicine* study can only suggest potential relationships. The researchers imply a correlation between egg intake, choline, TMAO, and adverse cardiovascular risk but the study methodology and results provide no clear indication that these disparate indices are tied together in cause-and-effect fashion. Further, the data should be more closely examined before drawing any conclusions, specifically:

- Statistical information for key data points are not provided, making it impossible to determine if significant differences exist between treatments.
- TMAO levels peaked one hour after hard boiled eggs was ingested, suggesting the meal was metabolized and the choline in the eggs converted to TMAO and absorbed within 60 minutes, an unusually rapid timeframe.
- Study subjects with the highest levels of TMAO in the blood displayed the lowest glomerular filtration rate, suggesting possible issues with kidney clearance which, in and of itself, could account for the elevation in blood TMAO levels.

To coordinate with leading choline researchers please contact the Egg Media Hotline at 1-855-EGGS411. For more information, visit www.incredibleegg.org or www.eggnutritioncenter.org.

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References:

ⁱTang WH, Wang Z, Levison, B, Koeth, RA, Britt EB, Hu X, Wu Y, Hazen, S. Intestinal Microbial Metabolism of Phosphatidylcholine and Cardiovascular Risk. *New England Journal of Medicine*. 2013 April 25. [E-pub ahead of print]

About the American Egg Board (AEB)

AEB is the U.S. egg producer's link to the consumer in communicating the value of the incredible edible egg™ and is funded from a national legislative checkoff on all egg production from companies with greater than 75,000 layers, in the continental United States. The board consists of 18 members and 18 alternates from all regions of the country who are appointed by the Secretary of Agriculture. The AEB staff carries out the programs under the board direction. AEB is located in Park Ridge, Ill. Visit www.IncredibleEgg.org for more information.

About the Egg Nutrition Center (ENC)

The Egg Nutrition Center (ENC) is the health education and research center of the American Egg Board. Established in 1979, ENC provides science-based information to health promotion agencies, physicians, dietitians, nutritional scientists, media and consumers on issues related to egg nutrition and the role of eggs in the American diet. ENC is located in Park Ridge, IL. Visit www.eggnutritioncenter.org or www.nutritionunscrambled.com for more information.