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Manipulation of dietary fatty acids and soluble fibre:
controlled intervention trials investigating
cardiovascular and type 2 diabetes risk

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for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy,
in the School of Biological Sciences
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CANDIDATE'S CONTRIBUTION TO THE WORK DESCRIBED IN THE THESIS

I carried out and was responsible for all human aspects of these trials at the University of Auckland, Human Nutrition Unit. Placement of indwelling venous canulae were performed in collaboration with a clinician from the School of Biological Sciences. All biochemical analyses were carried out at the University of Auckland, School of Biological Sciences under my direct supervision. Analysis of erythrocyte membrane fatty acids was carried out in collaboration with the Department of Chemistry. Hamatological indices were analysed by a commercial laboratory, Diagnostic Medlab Ltd. Direct analysis of diets was carried out by Milk and Health Research Centre, Massey University and Crop and Food Research Ltd, Palmerston North. Statistics were carried out in collaboration with a University statistician in the Department of Statistics.

ABSTRACT

Cardiovascular disease and type 2 diabetes mellitus are two of the leading causes of death in developed countries and the prevalence of these integrally linked disease states continues to grow. A number of modifiable risk factors contribute to the development of cardiovascular disease including raised blood cholesterol, hypertension and obesity, the latter also being an important modifiable risk for type 2 diabetes mellitus. Diet is also a critical factor underpinning the development and progression of these adult-onset diseases, however the complete role of diet in modifying risk has not yet been fully ascertained. This thesis describes a series of randomised, controlled cross-over intervention trials that have investigated the potentially beneficial effects of alterations in the macronutrient composition of the diet, specifically lipid and carbohydrate composition, in relation to both cardiovascular and type 2 diabetes risk.

Trial 1 investigated whether modifying the fatty acid profile of a bovine butter-fat, using simple feeding methods to substitute a moderate proportion of the saturated fatty acids with mono- and polyunsaturated fatty acids, could improve blood lipid profile and haemostatic clotting factors in 20 healthy men following a tightly controlled dietary regimen in which butter-fat was incorporated into a typical Western diet. Results showed that the inclusion of the modified butter-fat led to a clinically significant reduction in serum total ($P < 0.05$) and low-density lipoprotein cholesterol ($P < 0.01$) without a concomitant reduction in high-density lipoprotein cholesterol. The 7% decrease in serum low-density lipoprotein cholesterol, achieved with only a small alteration in the fatty acid composition of the total diet, would represent a significant reduction in cardiovascular risk if applied across a whole population.

The sub-study of Trial 1 investigated changes in erythrocyte membrane fatty acid composition during a period of controlled fat feeding in order to assess whether dietary change could alter membrane fatty acid composition over a 3 week period, and hence determine whether it may be a useful short-term biomarker of dietary compliance. The results showed some significant changes in erythrocyte membrane saturated, mono- and polyunsaturated fatty acids within 3 weeks following alterations in dietary fatty acid composition. All fatty acids changed in parallel with diet but in this group of 20 men only C18:0 and C18:1 had altered significantly ($P < 0.05$) by 3 weeks. The results of this trial suggest that the measurement of erythrocyte membrane fatty acid composition may be a valuable, independent, qualitative measure of dietary compliance in short-term intervention trials that currently rely on self-reported intake data, however they can provide no quantitative information.

Trial 2 assessed postprandial metabolic outcomes associated with cardiovascular risk, including triacylglycerol, triacylglycerol-rich lipoproteins, cholesterol-rich lipoproteins, haemostatic clotting factors, glucose, insulin and amylin, using the high saturate and high mono- and polyunsaturated fatty acid butter-fat as the fat challenge. The study, carried out in 18 healthy men, showed a significant increase in plasma triacylglycerol in the 3 hours immediately following ingestion of the high mono- and polyunsaturated fat feeding compared with the high saturated fat ($P < 0.05$). No other differential effects were observed. When both treatment groups were combined the total lipaemia induced by an acute fat bolus caused a delayed and prolonged increase in serum cholesterol and cholesterol-rich lipoproteins, confirming evidence from previous trials that fatty meals may cause cholesterol to be elevated for many hours postprandially and thereby confounding measures taken in the fasted state.

Trial 3 investigated the effects of adding a highly enriched barley-derived β -glucan (75% w/w) into a typical Western diet, in 18 'at risk' hypercholesterolaemic men following a highly controlled dietary protocol. The addition of 10g/day β -glucan to the diet failed to demonstrate significant improvements in lipid or glucose control, and hence no evidence of improvement in cardiovascular disease or type 2 diabetes mellitus risk. The inability to reduce serum cholesterol may have been a consequence of structural changes that occurred during the enrichment process converting the natural barley cereal into a high β -glucan product, as has been shown during similar enrichment processes of oat β -glucan.

These trials have demonstrated that under strictly controlled experimental conditions changes in the fatty acid composition of the diet can lead to improvement in cardiovascular disease risk, as measured by alterations in serum lipids, over a 3 week period. However, beneficial changes in postprandial markers of cardiovascular disease were not observed, nor were markers of type 2 diabetes risk in this group of individuals with normal lipid and glucose metabolism. The measurement of erythrocyte membrane fatty acid composition identified some potentially useful biomarkers of dietary compliance that may be useful in short-term trials. The dietary fibre manipulation described did not result in any significant improvements in cardiovascular disease or type 2 diabetes risk factors and raised important issues regarding the physiological activity of highly processed soluble fibre products, and highlighted the fact that not all β -glucan products have beneficial cholesterol-lowering properties.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Candidate's contribution to the work described in the thesis.....	i
Abstract.....	ii
Acknowledgements.....	iv
Table of Contents.....	v
List of Tables.....	viii
List of Figures.....	x
List of Abbreviations.....	xiii
CHAPTER 1. GENERAL INTRODUCTION	1
1.1 CARDIOVASCULAR DISEASE AND TYPE 2 DIABETES MELLITUS.....	1
1.1.1 CVD Overview	2
1.1.2 T2DM Overview	5
1.2 DIETARY FAT AND CARDIOVASCULAR DISEASE.....	8
1.2.1 Dietary fat classification.....	8
1.2.2 Worldwide dietary fat consumption trends	9
1.2.3 Relationship between dietary lipids and CVD	10
1.2.4 Mechanisms of action for the relationship between serum lipids and CVD	27
1.2.5 Relationship between dairy lipids and CVD	32
1.3 DIETARY FAT AND TYPE 2 DIABETES MELLITUS	40
1.3.1 Introduction	40
1.3.2 Dietary fat intake and T2DM.....	40
1.3.3 Obesity and T2DM	40
1.3.4 Factors affecting normal glucose homeostasis	41
1.3.5 Scientific consensus.....	46
1.3.6 Current dietary recommendations	46
1.4 DIETARY FIBRE AND CARDIOVASCULAR DISEASE	47
1.4.1 Introduction	47
1.4.2 Dietary fibre definition	47
1.4.3 Dietary fibre classification.....	48
1.4.4 Actual and recommended dietary fibre intakes	48
1.4.5 Relationship between dietary fibre and CVD.....	49
1.4.6 Mechanisms of action for relationship between dietary fibre and CVD	57
1.4.7 Scientific consensus.....	60
1.4.8 Current dietary recommendations	60
1.5 DIETARY FIBRE AND TYPE 2 DIABETES MELLITUS	61
1.5.1 Introduction	61
1.5.2 Relationship between dietary fibre and T2DM	61
1.5.3 Mechanisms of action for relationship between dietary fibre and T2DM.....	65
1.5.4 Scientific consensus.....	67
1.5.5 Current dietary recommendations	67
1.6 CONCLUSION	68
1.6.1 Diet and CVD	68
1.6.2 Diet and T2DM.....	69
1.7 AIM OF THE STUDIES IN THIS THESIS	70

CHAPTER 2.	COMMON METHODOLOGIES	71
2.1	HUMAN NUTRITION UNIT.....	71
2.2	TRIAL DESIGN	71
2.3	SUBJECT RECRUITMENT	72
2.3.1	Recruitment procedure	72
2.3.2	Screening protocol.....	72
2.4	BLOOD SAMPLE METHODOLOGY	72
2.4.1	Sample handling	72
2.4.2	Sample storage.....	72
2.4.3	Analytes measured.....	73
2.4.4	Sample analysis methods.....	73
2.5	MEASURES OF COMPLIANCE	78
2.5.1	24h urinary nitrogen validation	78
2.6	DIET PREPARATION AND ANALYSIS.....	82
2.6.1	Subject energy requirements.	82
2.6.2	Diet preparation and cooking	82
2.6.3	Direct chemical analysis composition methods.....	83
2.7	STATISTICS	86
2.7.1	Background.....	86
2.7.2	Power calculations.....	86
2.8	ETHICAL APPROVAL.....	87
2.8.1	Study 1 and Study 2 - Dairy lipid trials	87
2.8.2	Study 3: Barley β -glucan trial – 4 week intervention.....	87
CHAPTER 3.	DAIRY LIPID TRIAL: A 3 WEEK INTERVENTION IN HEALTHY MEN	88
3.1	INTRODUCTION	88
3.2	MATERIALS AND METHODS	93
3.2.1	Subject recruitment.....	93
3.2.2	Protocol.....	94
3.2.3	Butter-fat.....	96
3.2.4	Diet protocol	98
3.2.5	Statistics.....	100
3.3	RESULTS.....	101
3.3.1	Subjects.....	101
3.3.2	Butter-fat.....	101
3.3.3	Diet	101
3.3.4	Body weight.....	104
3.3.5	Compliance.....	104
3.3.6	Outcome variables	109
3.4	DISCUSSION	116
3.5	CONCLUSION	123
3.6	SUB-STUDY - CHANGES IN ERYTHROCYTE MEMBRANE FATTY ACID COMPOSITION ..	124
3.6.1	Introduction	124
3.6.2	Materials and Methods	126
3.6.3	Results	128
3.6.4	Discussion.....	136
3.6.5	Conclusion.....	139

CHAPTER 4.	DAIRY LIPID TRIAL: A 24 HOUR (POSTPRANDIAL) INTERVENTION IN HEALTHY MEN.....	141
4.1	INTRODUCTION.....	141
4.2	MATERIALS AND METHODS.....	145
4.2.1	Subject recruitment.....	145
4.2.2	Protocol.....	146
4.2.4	Butter-fat.....	148
4.2.5	Diet protocol.....	150
4.2.6	Statistics.....	152
4.3	RESULTS.....	153
4.3.1	Subjects.....	153
4.3.2	Butter-fat.....	153
4.3.3	Diet.....	153
4.3.4	Outcome variables.....	157
4.4	DISCUSSION.....	166
4.5	CONCLUSION.....	171
CHAPTER 5.	BARLEY β -GLUCAN TRIAL: A 4 WEEK INTERVENTION IN HYPERLIPIDAEMIC MEN.....	172
5.1	INTRODUCTION.....	172
5.2	MATERIALS AND METHODS.....	178
5.2.1	Subject recruitment.....	178
5.2.2	Protocol.....	179
5.2.3	Barley β -glucan product.....	182
5.2.4	Diet protocol.....	183
5.2.5	Statistics.....	185
5.3	RESULTS.....	186
5.3.1	Subjects.....	186
5.3.2	Barley β -glucan.....	186
5.3.3	Diet.....	186
5.3.4	Body weight.....	187
5.3.5	Compliance.....	191
5.3.6	Outcome variables.....	194
5.4	DISCUSSION.....	200
5.5	CONCLUSION.....	206
CHAPTER 6.	DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS.....	207
APPENDICES.....		215
Appendix I	Volunteer recruitment medical history questionnaire.....	215
Appendix II	Volunteer recruitment physical activity questionnaire.....	216
Appendix III	Volunteer 24 hour urine collection checklist.....	217
Appendix IV	3 week dairy lipid trial - study diet day 1.....	218
Appendix V	24 hour (postprandial) dairy lipid trial - study diet.....	219
Appendix VI	4 week barley β -glucan trial - study diet day 1.....	220
Appendix VII	Publications arising from the work described in the thesis.....	221
REFERENCES.....		222

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1.1 Dietary fatty acids.....	9
Table 1.2 Predictive equations for estimating changes in plasma lipoprotein cholesterol in response to dietary fatty acids and cholesterol.....	18
Table 3.1 Dairy lipid trial - 3 week intervention recruitment criteria.....	93
Table 3.2 Dairy lipid trial – 3 week intervention outcome variables	95
Table 3.3 Dairy lipid trial - 3 week intervention menu and rotation	99
Table 3.4 Clinical characteristics of male subjects at screening.....	102
Table 3.5 Composition of the control and modified butter.....	102
Table 3.6 Theoretical composition of the diet including the butter supplement as calculated using Diet 1™.. ..	103
Table 3.7 Actual composition of the diet including the butter supplement as measured by direct chemical analysis.	103
Table 3.8 Body weight and outcome variables at baseline and post-intervention.....	110
Table 3.9 Erythrocyte membrane fatty acids - outcome variables	126
Table 3.10 Fatty acid composition of the diet including the butter supplement as measured by direct chemical analysis.....	129
Table 3.11 Erythrocyte membrane fatty acids at baseline and post-intervention.....	133
Table 4.1 Dairy lipids study - 24 hour (postprandial) study recruitment criteria	145
Table 4.2 Dairy lipid trial – 24 hour (postprandial) study outcome variables.....	147
Table 4.3 Dairy lipid trial – 24 hour (postprandial) study feeding protocol.....	150
Table 4.4 Clinical characteristics of male subjects at screening.....	154
Table 4.5 Composition of the test muffin including the butter-fat supplement as calculated using Foodworks™.	155
Table 4.6 Composition of the fat-exclusion lunch as calculated using Foodworks™.	155
Table 4.7 Composition of the fat-exclusion snack as calculated using Foodworks™.	156
Table 4.8 Composition of the fat-exclusion dinner as calculated using Foodworks™.	156
Table 4.9 Outcome variables of the control and modified butter-fat treatments at t0 (baseline), t1, t3, t6, t10 and t24 hours	158

Table 5.1 Barley β -glucan - 4 week intervention recruitment criteria.....	178
Table 5.2 Barley β -glucan trial outcome variables.....	180
Table 5.3 Barley β -glucan trial feeding protocol.....	184
Table 5.4 Clinical characteristics of male subjects at screening.....	188
Table 5.5 Composition of the control and treatment products	188
Table 5.6 Theoretical composition of the diet including the barley β -glucan supplement as calculated using Foodworks™.....	189
Table 5.7 Actual composition of the diet including the barley β -glucan supplement as measured by direct chemical analysis.....	189
Table 5.8 Body weight and outcome variables at baseline and post-intervention.....	195

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1.1 Blood coagulation process	11
Figure 2.1 24h urine collection schedule	79
Figure 3.1 Dairy lipid trial - 3 week intervention experimental design.	94
Figure 3.2 Mean daily energy intake on 3 week control and modified butter-fat treatments.	105
Figure 3.3 Body weight during the control and modified butter-fat intervention periods.....	105
Figure 3.4 Average 24h urinary <i>para</i> -aminobenzoic acid (PABA) recovery	106
Figure 3.5 Average 24h urinary nitrogen excretion calculated as a percentage of 24h dietary nitrogen intake.	106
Figure 3.6 Correlation between nitrogen intake and nitrogen excretion.....	107
Figure 3.7 Fatty acid composition of erythrocyte membranes during the 3 week control and modified butter-fat treatments..	108
Figure 3.8 Total, LDL- and HDL-cholesterol during the 3 week control and modified butter-fat treatments.....	111
Figure 3.9 TC:HDL ratio during the 3 week control and modified butter-fat treatments.	113
Figure 3.10 Triacylglycerol during the 3 week control and modified butter-fat treatments.....	113
Figure 3.11 Apolipoprotein A and B during the 3 week control and modified butter-fat treatments.	113
Figure 3.12 Change in haemostatic clotting factors, fibrinogen and FVIIc, from baseline during the 3 week control and modified butter-fat treatments.	114
Figure 3.13 Fasting glucose during the 3 week control and modified butter-fat treatments.	114
Figure 3.14 Fasting insulin during the 3 week control and modified butter-fat treatments.....	114
Figure 3.15 Amylin during the 3 week control and modified butter-fat treatments.	115
Figure 3.16 Control and modified diet SFA composition, and erythrocyte membrane SFA change from baseline during the 3 week control and modified butter- fat treatments..	134

Figure 3.17 Control and modified diet MUFA and PUFA composition, and erythrocyte membrane MUFA and PUFA change from baseline during the 3 week control and modified butter-fat treatments	135
Figure 4.1 Dairy lipid trial - 24hour (postprandial) study experimental design	146
Figure 4.2 Dairy lipid trial – 24 hour (postprandial) study feeding and blood sampling protocol	151
Figure 4.3 Postprandial changes in total, chylomicron-rich and chylomicron-poor TG fractions following consumption of a high fat breakfast containing a control or modified butter-fat.	160
Figure 4.4 Total cholesterol, LDL-cholesterol and HDL-cholesterol following consumption of a high fat breakfast containing control and modified butter-fat.	161
Figure 4.5 Free fatty acids following consumption of a high fat breakfast containing control and modified butter-fat.....	162
Figure 4.6 Apolipoprotein A and B following consumption of a high fat breakfast containing control and modified butter-fat.....	162
Figure 4.7 Plasma glucose following consumption of a high fat breakfast containing control and modified butter-fat.....	164
Figure 4.8 Insulin following consumption of a high-fat breakfast containing control and modified butter-fat.....	164
Figure 4.9 Amylin following consumption of a high fat breakfast containing control and modified butter-fat.....	165
Figure 4.10 Change in haemostatic clotting factors, FVIIc and fibrinogen, during the 24h control and modified butter-fat treatments.	165
Figure 5.1 Barley β -glucan trial - 4 week intervention experimental design.....	179
Figure 5.2 OGTT blood sampling.....	181
Figure 5.3 Mean daily energy intake on 4 week glucose control and barley β -glucan treatment periods.	190
Figure 5.4 Body weight maintenance during 4 week glucose control and barley β -glucan treatment periods.....	190
Figure 5.5 Average 24h urinary <i>para</i> -aminobenzoic acid (PABA) recovery	192
Figure 5.6 Average 24h urinary nitrogen excretion calculated as a percentage of 24h dietary nitrogen intake	192
Figure 5.7 Correlation between nitrogen intake and nitrogen excretion	193

Figure 5.8 Total, LDL- and HDL-cholesterol, and TC:HDL ratio during the 4 week control and barley β -glucan treatment.....	196
Figure 5.9 Triacylglycerol during the 4 week control and barley β -glucan treatment.....	198
Figure 5.10 Fasting glucose during the 4 week control and barley β -glucan treatment	198
Figure 5.11 Change in venous glucose concentrations during an OGTT.....	199
Figure 5.12 AUC glucose, change from baseline during the 4 week glucose control and barley β -glucan treatment	199

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

24h	24 hours
24h N	24 hour nitrogen balance
ADA	American Diabetes Association
AHA	American Heart Association
ALT	alanine transaminase
ANOVA	analysis of variance
apo A	apolipoprotein A
apo B	apolipoprotein B
AST	aspartate transaminase
AUC	area under the curve
BMR	basal metabolic rate
BMI	body mass index
C10:0	capric acid
C12:0	lauric acid
C14:0	myristic acid
C15:0	pentadecanoic acid
C16:0	palmitic acid
C16:1	palmitoleic acid
C17:0	heptadecanoic acid
C18:0	stearic acid
C18:1	oleic acid
C18:2	linoleic acid
C18:3	linolenic acid
C20:4	eicosatetraenoic acid
C20:5	eicosapentaenoic acid
C22:4	docotetraenoic acid
C22:6	docohexaenoic acid
CHO	carbohydrate
CVD	cardiovascular disease
DBP	diastolic blood pressure
DHA	docosahexaenoic acid
EDTA	ethylenediamine tetraacetate
e.g.	Latin <i>exempli gratia</i> meaning 'for example'
EI	energy intake
en%	percentage of total energy
EPA	eicosapentaenoic acid
et al	Latin <i>et alii</i> meaning 'and others'
FAMES	fatty acid methyl esters
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organisation
FFA	free fatty acid
FVIIc	factor VII coagulant activity
FVIIa	activated factor VII
g	gram
g	gravitational force
GGT	γ -glutamyltransferase
g/L	grams per litre
Hb	haemoglobin
Hb _{A1c}	glycated haemoglobin
HDL-C	high-density lipoprotein cholesterol
IGT	impaired glucose tolerance

kg	kilogram
kJ	kilojoule
LDL-C	low-density lipoprotein cholesterol
MEDLINE	National Library of Medicine, Bethesda, MD
mg	milligram
MJ	megajoule
mM	millimolar
mmol/L	millimole per litre
MUFA	monounsaturated fatty acid
mU/L	milliunits per litre
MW	molecular weight
N	nitrogen
nm	nanometer
NADH	nicotinamide dinucleotide
NCEP	National Cholesterol Education Program
NI	nitrogen intake
NSP	non-starch polysaccharide
°C	degrees celcius
OGTT	oral glucose tolerance test
PABA	<i>para</i> -amino benzoic acid
pers comm	personal communication
per se	meaning 'by or in itself' from Latin
pmol/L	picamole per litre
PUFA	polyunsaturated fatty acid
RBC	red blood cell
RDA	recommended daily allowance
RIA	radio-immunoassay
RS	resistant starch
SAS	statistical analysis software™
SBP	systolic blood pressure
SCFA	short-chain fatty acid
s.d.	standard deviation
s.e.m.	standard error of the mean
SFA	saturated fatty acid
SST	serum separation tube™
T2DM	type 2 diabetes mellitus
TC	total cholesterol
TG	triacylglycerol
T4	thyroxin
TRL	triacylglycerol-rich lipoprotein
TSH	thyroid stimulating hormone
UK	United Kingdom
U/L	units per litre
Umol/L	micromole per litre
USA	United States of America
USFDA	United States Food and Drug Administration
VLDL-C	very low-density lipoprotein cholesterol
VLDL-TG	very low-density lipoprotein triacylglycerol
WBC	white blood cell
WHO	World Health Organisation
WHR	waist:hip ratio