AMERICAN HEART ASSN. “TASTE SENSITIVITY” DRAFT #1

ANNCR: IT TURNS OUT THAT SOME PEOPLE MAY NOT EAT THEIR VEGETABLES BECAUSE OF THEIR GENES. A NEW STUDY PRESENTED AT THE AMERICAN HEART ASSOCIATION’S SCIENTIFIC SESSIONS 2019 HAS FOUND A SPECIFIC GENE VARIATION THAT MAKES VEGETABLES TASTE EXTREMELY BITTER. PEOPLE WITH THE GENE ARE MORE THAN TWO-AND-A-HALF TIMES AS LIKELY TO EAT ONLY SMALL AMOUNTS OF HEART-HEALTHY VEGETABLES AS OTHER PEOPLE, ACCORDING TO STUDY AUTHOR JENNIFER SMITH OF THE UNIVERSITY OF KENTUCKY SCHOOL OF MEDICINE.

SMITH: TASTE IS AN IMPORTANT FACTOR IN FOOD CHOICE, AND PEOPLE WITH THIS GENE ARE CALLED ‘SUPERTASTERS’—THEY PERCEIVED A RUIN-YOUR-DAY LEVEL OF BITTER WHEN THEY TASTED THE TEST COMPOUND. SO THEY’RE LIKELY TO FIND BROCCOLI, BRUSSELS SPROUTS AND CABBAGE UNPLEASANTLY BITTER. THEY MAY ALSO REACT NEGATIVELY TO DARK CHOCOLATE, COFFEE AND SOMETIMES BEER.

ANNCR: SMITH SAYS You have to consider how things taste if you really want your patient to follow nutrition guidelines. RESEARCHERS HOPE TO USE GENETIC INFORMATION TO FIGURE OUT SPICES THAT CAN APPEAL TO SUPERTASTERS --TO MAKE IT EASIER FOR THEM TO EAT MORE VEGETABLES.