



NEW ENGLAND

FUNCTIONAL FITNESS

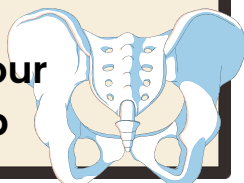


The Gym Rag

PELVIC FLOOR SEMINAR

Physical therapist Dr. Michelle Broughton, who was featured in our January newsletter, will be hosting a seminar on pelvic floor health on Monday April 22 from 4 to 5 p.m. The seminar is welcome to all who want to learn more about the pelvic floor.

Please speak to your coach to sign up



CORRELATION VS CAUSATION: WHAT SHOULD WE BELIEVE?

In this age of information, we are always searching for the truth. In the world of science, we rely on peer-reviewed processes to keep our work as objective and unbiased as possible. Research can often reveal a correlation between variables: a relationship, link, or trend. However, causation, which means one variable directly influences the other to *cause* such a result, must be proven on its own. Causation cannot be determined solely from a correlation.

Recently, a study was released claiming a link between intermittent fasting and heart disease. The evidence does seem strong, monitoring about 20,000 US adults over 8-17 years. Prior research has also shown that fasting has improved blood pressure, blood glucose and cholesterol. While the study author said the results were surprising, he clarified that even though long-term fasting was *correlated* with cardiovascular death, he could not say that it was the *cause*. Even though the evidence might seem damning or totally obvious, we still need to remain skeptical.

Monthly trivia

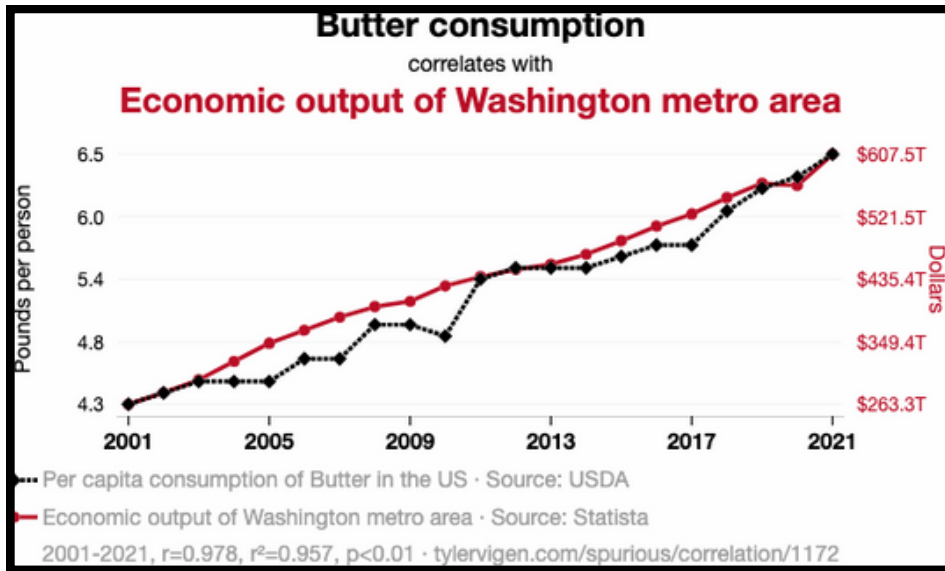
January's answer:

Lean body mass and non-lean body mass

This month's question:

The knee is what type of joint?

Now, this is neither in support nor protest of fasting; it's just a good example of how these properties work. There are many examples of how two completely different variables appear to be linked, but are in fact not related at all. Like butter consumption and economic output of the Washington metro area. It would appear that the more butter consumed, the more dollars are generated. Curious...

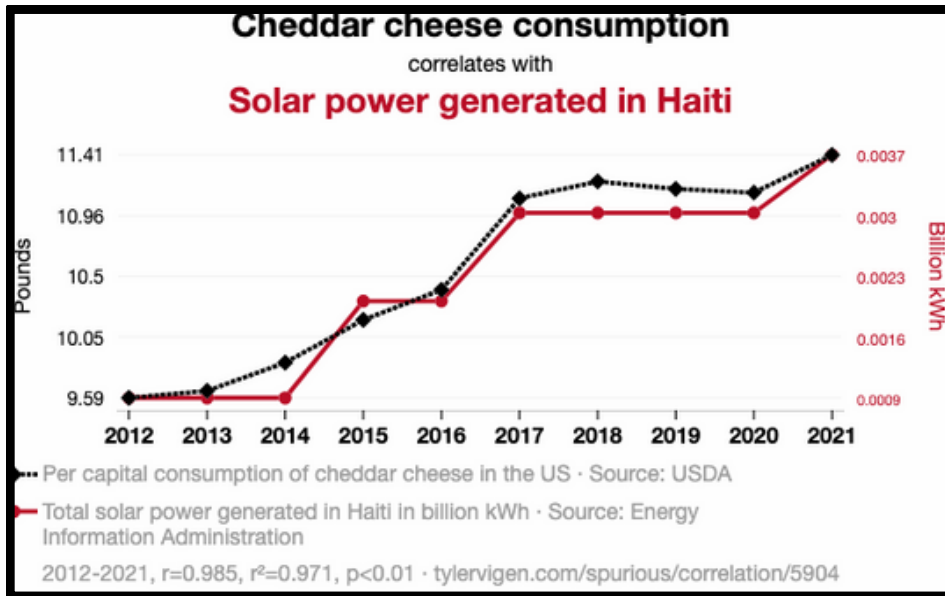


Yes, these are far-fetched and one can't help but laugh, which is partially the purpose. The larger picture, however, is how two completely unrelated variables can have trends that are very closely intertwined.

Another example is how increased ice cream sales are correlated with violent crime rate increases. One might suspect the reason might be that criminals are treating themselves after committing a crime. In fact, there is a third variable that is affecting the increases: hot weather! People get cranky when they're hot and they either go buy ice cream or hijack a car. The latter is pretty unfortunate, but at least we know that Ben & Jerry (probably) isn't behind a massive conspiracy to drive their sales up through violence - seems off-brand for them.



Or this one, that tells us if we only eat more cheddar, then Haiti can keep its lights on longer.



Or how tennis great Roger Federer inspires New Mexico residents to become electronics engineers?

