Editorial

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Functional Food for Cancer Treatment

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Editorial

One of the most pressing worldwide concerns of this century is the development of functional foods for the prevention of chronic diseases. In China and other nations around the world, cancer is not only the first or second leading cause of death, but nutrition is also one of the most important modifiable risk factors. Polished grain foods and a lack of fresh vegetables are two major dietary components now proven to cause cancer development, with general importance for an unhealthy lifestyle and obesity. Increased consumption of functional foods such as whole grains (brown rice, barley, and buckwheat) and by-products, as well as some vegetables (bitter melon, garlic, onions, and broccoli) are cancer prevention measures in humans. Additionally, some beverages (such as green tea and coffee) may be beneficial. Southwest China (particularly Yunnan Province) is a geographical area where functional crop production is directly linked to human evolution's roots, with anticancer implications. Most of the time, functional foods are referred to as nutraceuticals, which are a class of very nutrient-dense molecules that provide a variety of health benefits such as preventing nutrient deficiency and encouraging healthy growth. These compounds differ from other conventional foods in that they contain specific components that are directly linked to an individual's wellbeing and help them stay fit, whereas conventional foods such as low-fat containing products and vegetables provide a healthy intake to individuals as a complete food rather than just one part of a product.

Prebiotics are a type of non-digestible food that irritates the host and stimulates the movement and growth of bacteria in the colon, whereas probiotics are a type of microbial dietary supplement that improves people's health and is used as a functional food. Fatty acids such as conjugated linolenic acid, butyric acid, carotenoids, and antioxidants are examples of Nutraceuticals used as functional foods. Certain disorders, such as stroke prevention, coronary heart disease, immune response dysfunction, cancer, and visual defects such as cataracts, benefit from these components. In the late 19th century these functional food are firstly branded in japan being the food products that exhibits all the details elements having therapeutically active and biotic qualities. Later, China specified that any food with therapeutic or biological properties will be referred to as functional food. Some plant-based functional foods also contain bioactive substances and exhibit pharmacological mechanisms such as hypolipidemic effects and biological impacts. Flavonoids, steroidal, saponins, polysaccharides, alkaloids, and polyphenols are the six major types of these chemicals. Vitamins, minerals, antioxidants, omega-3 fatty acids, prebiotics, and probiotics are some of the new functional food classifications.

The primary issue with using functional foods is that they decay quickly in the environment. As the demand for functional foods grows, scientists are attempting to discover the various applications of functional foods in the treatment of diseases such as cancer. By mixing two or more ingredients, a functional food claims to have an additional function (typically one related to health promotion or illness prevention). The term can also indicate traits that have been purposely bred into existing food plants, such as purple or gold potatoes with reduced levels of anthocyanin or carotenoid. According to the Food and Drug Administration, functional foods are “intended to provide physiological benefits and/or reduce the risk of chronic disease beyond basic nutritional functions, and may appear like traditional food and be consumed as part of a regular diet”.