

Phytonutrients: A Boon for Mankind

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Editorial

Thousands of natural compounds are found in plants derived foods, one of such compounds is called as phytonutrients or phytochemicals or plant bioactive compounds. The Greek word "phyto" means "plant." These substances aid in the protection of plants against bacteria, fungus, bugs, and other pests. Antioxidant and anti-inflammatory properties of phytonutrients are of their major advantages. Phytonutrients may also improve immunity and intercellular communication, as well as repair DNA damage caused by pollutants, detoxify carcinogens, and change oestrogen metabolism. Phytonutrients, unlike the vitamins and minerals found in plant foods, aren't required for survival but on the other hand they may help to prevent sickness and keep your body functioning properly if you consume or drink them. Plant foods include more than 25,000 phytonutrients. Most regularly used phytonutrient include carotenoids which are antioxidants. Carotenoids are the pigments that give fruits and vegetables their yellow, orange, or red color. Tomatoes, watermelon, and pink grapefruit are red or pink due to lycopene. This compound really has so much beneficial role in human health. A decreased risk of prostate cancer has been associated to lycopene. Zeaxanthin and lutein are two types of carotenoids. These may aid in the prevention of tumors and age-related macular degeneration, two common eye issues. Vegetables, such as spinach, kale, and collards, are high in these phytonutrients. Ellagic acid may be found in a variety of berries and plant foods, including strawberries, raspberries, and pomegranates. Ellagic acid may help to prevent cancer in a variety of ways. It might, for example, impede the proliferation of cancer cells. It may also assist your liver in removing cancer-causing substances

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from your system. Grapes, purple grape juice, red wine contain resveratrol. It has antioxidant and anti-inflammatory properties. Through the continuous rigorous research in this field, they have discovered so many health benefits of these compounds. They found out that phytonutrients contained in fruits, vegetables, tea leaves, and beans which can inhibit the effects of dioxins in-vitro. Dioxin toxicity was reduced by half when phytonutrient levels in the bloodstream were increased by eating three apples a day or a spoonful of red onion. Several studies, resveratrol may help to lower the risk of heart disease and some malignancies. Animal studies have revealed that it may help people live longer. However, more human research is required to demonstrate a clear connection. The consumption of flavonoids from apples and onions was shown to be directly linked to the lowest risk of coronary death, according to epidemiologists. So, from myriad number of health benefits of the phytonutrients, it's quite clear that more and more research is required to unveil the other potential health benefits of these compounds.