Compound in Broccoli May Help Protect Against Asthma and Other Respiratory Diseases

In a recent issue of *Clinical Immunology*, researchers at UCLA and the US Environmental Protection Agency report that sulforaphane, a compound that occurs in cruciferous vegetables such as broccoli, may help protect against respiratory inflammation and the diseases it causes, including asthma and allergic rhinitis.*

The team administered a preparation of broccoli sprouts, which contain high amounts of sulforaphane, or a preparation of alfalfa sprouts to 65 men and women for three days. Gene expression of antioxidant enzymes was evaluated in nasal passage rinse samples collected before and after treatment.

“We found a two- to three-fold increase in antioxidant enzymes in the nasal airway cells of study participants who had eaten a preparation of broccoli sprouts,” principal investigator Dr. Riedl noted. “This strategy may offer protection against inflammatory processes and could lead to potential treatments for a variety of respiratory conditions.”

—Dayna Dye

* *Clin Immunol.* 2009 Mar;130(3):244-51.

Clinical Studies Demonstrate Benefits of Life Extension’s DHEA Formulation

Dehydroepiandrosterone (DHEA) is a popular anti-aging supplement associated with many health benefits. Two impressive studies utilized Life Extension’s brand of DHEA to demonstrate that doses of 50 mg/day can help accelerate abdominal fat loss, improve insulin sensitivity, and increase lean muscle mass.

In the first placebo-controlled study, investigators examined the effect of DHEA on visceral fat (within the abdomen) and subcutaneous fat (under the skin) in 56 men and women aged 65 to 78 years. After six months of supplementation, they found that women lost an average of 10.2% of their visceral fat, while men lost an average of 7.4%. Subcutaneous fat loss averaged about 6% for both groups. DHEA also improved insulin sensitivity in this study. The investigators concluded, “long-term DHEA replacement therapy might reduce the accumulation of abdominal fat and protect against the development of the metabolic/insulin resistance syndrome.”

Since endogenous levels of DHEA decline by about 80% between the ages of 25 and 75 years, which correlates with a decrease in muscle mass and strength, the same research team also studied the effect of DHEA on lean tissue. They found that after 10 months of supplementation, DHEA maximized increases in muscle mass and strength induced by four months of weight-training exercise in 56 elderly men and women. The researchers concluded, “DHEA replacement has the additional benefit of enhancing the increases in muscle mass and strength induced by heavy resistance exercise.”

—Bina Singh


Greater Carotenoid Intake Linked With Longer Cancer-Free Survival in Breast Cancer Patients

A recent issue of *Cancer Epidemiology, Biomarkers & Prevention* published the discovery of a positive effect of high carotenoid intake on recurrence-free survival in breast cancer patients.*

Compared with women whose carotenoid levels were among the lowest one-third of participants, subjects whose levels were in the top two-thirds experienced a 33% lower risk of recurrent or new primary breast cancer:

“Longer-term exposure to a high vegetable and fruit dietary pattern that promotes higher plasma carotenoid concentration may improve prognosis and survival,” they concluded.

—Dayna Dye

* *Cancer Epidemiol Biomarkers Prev.* 2009 Feb;18(2):486-94.
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