

Health benefits of phytochemicals

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Phytochemicals are naturally occurring, biologically active chemical compounds in plants. The identification, isolation, characterization processing of these phytochemicals has led to strong interest in the area of functional foods. Different strategies have been developed for the use of these phytochemicals from various crops to fit intended marketing niches. Phytochemicals derived from plants have provided the basis for numerous commercial medications used today for the treatment of a wide range of diseases such as high blood pressure, pain, asthma, and cancer. Ephedrine, a phytochemical, is used in the commercial pharmaceutical preparations for the relief of asthma symptoms and other respiratory problems. When consumed in the diet, there is an increasing body of evidence to indicate that phytochemicals may reduce the risk of age-related chronic diseases such as coronary heart disease. Our bodies utilize a small fraction of these components by incorporating them into various cellular and metabolic processes that enhance cellular growth, regeneration and repair. Most phytochemicals have demonstrated antioxidant activity outside of the body, consuming them would bolster the level of antioxidants in the bloodstream. This would then lead to improved health and wellbeing as well as extending one's life expectancy.

Biography

Parveen Kumari has completed her post-graduation in Food Technology from GJUS&T, Hisar. Presently pursuing Ph.D in Food Technology from GJUS&T, Hisar.

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