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Mediterranean nutrition as the best source of functional food in Montenegro

Dijana Durovic¹, B Mugosa¹ and M M Vrvic²¹Institute of Public Health of Montenegro, Montenegro²University of Belgrade, Serbia

It is well known that the so-called Mediterranean food rich in vegetables, fruits and olive oil has a beneficial effect in terms of prevention of cardiovascular diseases; the Eskimos do not suffer from the cardiovascular diseases due to abundant ω -3 fat acids because they feed with fish. Also some African tribes do not have colon cancer because they do not eat meat, only plants, meaning they eat food rich in dietary fibers. The advantage of Mediterranean diet ("five times a day") is in using and implementation of functional food concept in nutrition. Based on the evidence of relationship between food and health nowadays there are more and more discussions about food. Everyday new evidence is coming on specific food or food components that have a beneficial effect on health. Functional food-containing components have a favorable impact on the health and to general condition of the human body. This designation as the most general dates back about 25 years ago, when this term began to circulate, especially among nutritionists medical profession and in public, when it has become 'modern' consuming functional food, which food market "wholeheartedly" supported. Functional food may be similar to conventional food and be consumed as part of common food, providing not only basic nutrition functions to organism but also some physiological benefits and/or reduce the risk of chronic diseases i.e. containing a biologically active components (BAC). Functional food have an optimal effect on the digestive system, has a beneficial effect on the immune system, blood vessels, usually has great antioxidant potential, which is important against free radicals formation that are produced daily in the body depending on the environment and lifestyle. Functional food contains one or more bioactive components. Also, functional food is a food with some added or removed components in terms of improving its effects (vitamins, minerals, saturated fat, sugar, salt). There are several different resources in Montenegro as a Mediterranean country, that can be used as a source of functional food. Some vegetables and spice plants are well known from the past such as: Green collard (*Brassica oleracea* var. *acephala*) containing diindolylmethane and sulphorafane as a confirmed cancerostatics, Green Purslane (*Portulacasa oleracea*) containing BAC as a confirmed antidiabetics, Swiss chard (*Beta vulgaris* subsp. *cicla*) containing antioxidants and dietary fibers. (*Ziziphus jujube*), (*Arbutus uredo*), (*Morus nigra*) and (*Pinus pinea*) are some typical Mediterranean plants that can be found in Montenegro. Although today people still choose food according to price and taste, people of the future will dial the "functional food" with a desire to feel better after eating (Let your food be your medicine, and the medicine your food (460-377 BC) Hippocrates.

Biography

Dijana Djurovic presently working at Institute of Public Health, Podgorica, Montenegro. He studied from University of Belgrade, Serbia (1989-1995)

dil@t-com.me

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