Breaking News on Supplements & Nutrition - North America

SCIENCE BRIEF

Study confirms safe doses of cocoa flavanols for supplements & fortified products

By Stephen DANIELLS, 11-Nov-2015

Consuming up to two grams per day of cocoa flavanols for 12 weeks is well tolerated in healthy men and women, says a new study from scientists from Mars Inc. and the University of California, Davis.

While numerous studies have reported the potential cardiovascular benefits of the cocoa compounds, there was a need to establish the tolerability and safety of consuming flavanols, explained the researchers in the American Journal of Clinical Nutrition.

Thirty-four healthy adults consumed doses of cocoa flavanols ranging from 1,000 to 2,000 mg per day for six weeks, and the results showed that 27 of the participants experienced a total of 48 adverse events. These were all deemed to be mild. In addition, no significant effects on blood pressure or platelet function were observed during this study.

Based on the first study, a second study was performed. Seventy-four participants were included in the controlled, randomized, double-masked, 2-parallel-arm study, which had 46 people consuming up to 2,000 mg per day for 12 weeks, and 28 people consuming a cocoa flavanol-free control for the same duration.

Results of the second intervention revealed that there were no significant differences in blood pressure or platelet function between the two groups over 12 weeks. Moreover, no clinically relevant changes in the metabolic variables were observed in either group.

"Collectively, these findings suggest that the consumption of up to 2000 mg cocoa flavanols daily is well tolerated by healthy men and women," wrote the researchers.

"Contrary to our initial assumption, we did not observe any significant changes in blood pressure or platelet function in our study cohort after either an acute intake of cocoa flavanols in amounts of up to 1000 mg or after the consumption of up to 2000 mg cocoa flavanols/d for 12 wk.

"Although the current results may seem to be at odds with findings from previous studies, in which changes in platelet function and blood pressure after cocoa flavanols intake were observed, the participants in those studies were often individuals who had either been diagnosed with CVD or who exhibited a high risk of CVD. In marked contrast to the above, the population recruited here consisted of a healthy cohort who exhibited a very low CVD risk."

Source: American Journal of Clinical Nutrition
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"Safety and efficacy of cocoa flavanol intake in healthy adults: a randomized, controlled, double-masked trial"
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