

Eat your ice cream? Study shows antioxidant ice cream can promote overall health

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Oxidative stress is essentially an imbalance between the production of free radicals and the ability of the body to counteract or detoxify their harmful effects through neutralization by antioxidants.

The aim of the study was to evaluate the acute effect of oxidative stress, endothelial function, and physical performance by ingesting 100 grams of natural ice cream rich in polyphenols rather than the control milk chocolate ice cream.

In the controlled, single-blind, crossover study, 14 healthy individuals (seven men and seven women between 20 and 40 years old) were randomized to consume 100 grams of either antioxidant ice cream containing dark cocoa powder, hazelnut, and green tea extract or milk chocolate ice cream (control ice cream). An exercise stress test was performed before randomization and then two hours after ice cream was ingested.

Each participant was asked to abstain from any type of medication, dietary supplement, or intensive physical activity and to avoid the consumption of polyphenol-rich foods, such as cocoa-containing products, red wine, and tea, two weeks prior to the test.

Two hours after the test subjects consumed the antioxidant ice cream, the serum level of polyphenols *“increased significantly,”* while oxidative stress decreased, according to the study.

“There was also a significant improvement in the endothelium-mediated artery dilation measured by FMD and Endopat 2000. The exercise test performed after the intake of antioxidant ice cream showed a significant improvement in the physical performance compared with that for the control ice cream,” the study said.

The study suggests that the ingestion of an antioxidant ice cream consisting of a selection of polyphenol-rich foods (i.e. cocoa powder, hazelnut, and green tea extract) improves vascular function and physical performance.

In addition, researchers concluded that ice cream is potentially effective in counteracting oxidative stress in healthy individuals, athletes, elderly, and even in patients suffering from some chronic and degenerative diseases.

Source: Nutrition/Science Direct

“Natural antioxidant ice cream acutely reduces oxidative stress and improves vascular function and physical performance in healthy individuals”

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