Healthcare Professionals Newsletter

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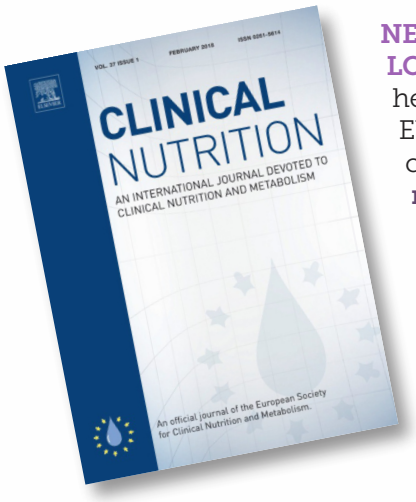
FURTHER PROOF THAT PRUNES SUPPORT BOWEL HEALTH



NEW RESEARCH BY PROFESSOR KEVIN WHELAN OF KING'S COLLEGE LONDON – the renowned centre of excellence for nutrition and digestive health - demonstrates encouraging results to further enhance the existing EU authorised health claim for prunes and normal bowel function, and clearly demonstrating the efficacy of eating prunes at a **lower consumption rate of 80g,** as opposed to the higher amount of 100g recorded in previous studies. Eating less prunes to achieve the same desired effect may appeal to those who were concerned at the requirement to eat 100g of prunes daily.

The results are also a reminder that encouraging a balanced diet with sufficient fibre, including prunes represents an efficacious and cost effective, more natural solution to reducing the reliance on over-the-counter (laxative) medication. (Lever E, *Clinical Nutrition* 2018).

To read more click here.

Prune it for kids

With childhood obesity[1] and dental decay on the rise due in part to excessive sugar intake amongst UK children, California prunes offer a high fibre, convenience fruit that can effectively reduce the added sugar and fat in children's food. Their unique blend of pectin and sorbitol offers fat-like (though fat-free) characteristics that enhance flavour and shelf-life. 100kcal California prunes provides 3.1g fibre (44g portion). These delicious prune cookies contain 51 kcal per cookie. http://www.californiaprunes.co.uk/recipe/quick-california-prune-cookies/

(1) Nearly a third of children aged 2-15 years are overweight or obese, and children are becoming obese earlier and staying obese for longer. Source: HM Government (2016) Childhood Obesity: A Plan for Action. Available at: https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/childhood-obesity-a-plan-for-action [Accessed 23/01/2017].

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DIET AND RHEUMATOID ARTHRITIS

RHEUMATOID ARTHRITIS (RA) IS A DEBILITATING, CHRONIC INFLAMMATORY AUTOIMMUNE DISORDER, WITH HIGH DRUG COSTS AND A SEVERE IMPACT ON QUALITY OF LIFE FOR SUFFERERS. It results in joint destruction and bone loss and although the exact causes remain unknown, environmental (eg smoking, infectious diseases) and genetic factors are equally responsible.

This burden of increased morbidity and mortality in RA sufferers, together with the high drug treatment costs, provided the rationale for a recent literature review, (Khanna S, *Front Nutr* 2017;4:52) explores different dietary approaches to treating RA, including prunes. Khanna et al (2017) describe the growing wealth of literature around dietary therapy that is suggestive of a positive impact on RA activity, although they stress that no dietary intervention has thus far been conclusively proven. Nevertheless, reducing symptoms through diet, within an overall healthy dietary pattern is a sensible approach, since drugs currently in use are also not 100% effective.

To read more click here.

Further evidence for the role on prunes in bone health

Adding to the growing number of human and animal studies looking at the beneficial role of prunes in bone health, (Graef J. *J Nutr Bioc* 2017; Graef. *Curr Dev Nutr* 2017), carried out in vitro studies to add to our understanding of the mechanism behind the beneficial effects of prunes reported to date.

Prunes are high in vitamin K and a source of manganese, which contribute to the maintenance of normal bones.

To read more click here.

Prune essence concentrate benefits intestinal function and blood lipids

A randomised control trial (Chiu H, Pharmaceutical Biology 2017; 55:974-979) using prune essence concentrate for 4 weeks in 60 healthy mild hypercholesterolemic subjects showed significant improvements to gut microbiota and reductions in total and LDL cholesterol.

To read more click here.

Rheumatoid Arthritis: A specific role for prunes?

One of the factors contributing to RA progression is the production of inflammatory mediators including tumour necrosis factor (TNF), the net result being the formation of synovitis and the destruction of bone and cartilage. Drug therapy for RA includes anti-TNF-therapies which are costly, produce unfavourable immunosuppressive properties and have an increased risk of infectious diseases.

Prunes have been shown to exert anti-inflammatory properties and suppress TNF in several studies investigating their effects on bone health. Polyphenols, in particular neochlorogenic acid (present at 91.6-133mg/100g prunes) are considered the bioactives responsible for prunes anti-inflammatory effects. A new study adds to this body of evidence. Mirza F *et al* (*J Nutr Bioc* 2018;54;54-61) investigated the specific effects of prunes in both an arthritis induced mouse model (using transgenic mice that overexpress TNF); plus a cell study to explore the anti-inflammatory effects of neochlorogenic acid.

To read more click here.

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