



Red Wine May Make Meat Healthier

Healthy Compounds in Red Wine May Offset Potentially Unhealthy Compounds in Meat, Study Shows

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June 27, 2008 -- Having a meaty meal? Drinking a little red wine may make it healthier, thanks to compounds in red wine, an Israeli study shows.

The researchers cooked turkey thighs and then ground them up for the study. They fed the ground turkey to rats, with or without red wine that had been stripped of its alcohol.

When the rats finished eating, the researchers analyzed the rats' stomach and blood chemistry.

The rats that had eaten the turkey meat without the wine had high levels of chemicals that promote oxidation, which has been linked to cancer, atherosclerosis, and other serious diseases, the study states.

But the rats that got the turkey meat and the red wine had less of those oxidation chemicals in their stomach and blood after their meal.

Chalk that up to antioxidants called polyphenols in red wine, say the researchers, who included Shlomit Gorelik, MSc, of the Hebrew University of Jerusalem.

Red wine's antioxidants balanced out the turkey meat's oxidants, and the stomach was the "bioreactor" where that balancing act took place, Gorelik's team reports.

Red wine isn't the only way to get polyphenols. Good sources also include onions, apples, tea, red grapes, grape juice, strawberries, raspberries, blueberries, cranberries, and certain nuts, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

"Diets high in fat and red meat are contributory risk factors, whereas the consumption of polyphenol-rich fruits, vegetables, and their derived beverages during the meal seems to reduce these risk factors and provide important protective benefits for human health," the researchers write in the *Journal of Agricultural and Food Chemistry*.

The researchers say their findings are in line with other research in people. But they didn't follow the rats to see if drinking red wine led to better health or longer lives.

Department of Agricultural Research Service: "Phytonutrient FAQs."

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