

[IMAGE]

Vitamin C, Fruit and Veggie Consumption May Help Prevent RA

Rheumatoid arthritis (RA) is a debilitating and painful disease whose cause is thought to be a complex combination of genetic factors and environmental agents. Diet has been implicated in the development of other diseases, but little is known about the influence of diet on the development and/or progression of RA.

A recent study evaluated the association between fruit and vegetable consumption and dietary antioxidants, and the risk of developing inflammatory polyarthritis (IP), or RA. Researchers studied 23,654 men and women (ages 45-74), who completed seven-day diet diaries, providing comprehensive data on their consumption of fruits and vegetables and other foods high in dietary antioxidants. Participants were asked to estimate the amount of food and drink they consumed each day using household measures and food portion photographs (small, medium, large).

Participants had developed IP during the study period (1993-2001) and were then referred by their primary care physicians to a study designed to identify and follow up on cases of IP. For comparative purposes, each case of IP was matched for age and sex with two controls free of the disease. Seventy-four cases of IP were identified over the nine-year study period. Lower consumption of vitamin C, fruits and vegetables was associated with an increased risk of developing IP compared to subjects with higher consumption. Subjects with the lowest intake of vitamin C had three times the risk of developing IP compared to those with the highest intake.

So eat your fruit and veggies! And for more information on nutrition, visit www.chiroweb.com/find/archives/nutrition.

Reference:

Pattison DJ, Silman AJ, Goodson NJ, et al. Vitamin C and the risk of developing inflammatory polyarthritis: prospective nested case-control study. *Annals of the Rheumatic Diseases* June 2004;63:843-7.

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