

Olive Oil Found to Help with Stroke Risk

By Greg Arnold, DC, CSCS, July 17, 2011, abstracted from "Olive oil consumption, plasma oleic acid, and stroke incidence: The Three-City Study" published online in *Neurology*

Link - http://www.now-university.com/Library/DiseaseResistance/CholesterolCardiovascular/084989.htm?utm_source=Weekly%2BNewsletter&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=Healthy%2BAging%2BArticle

Stroke is the third leading cause of death in Americans, with 795,000 strokes expected to occur in 2010, causing about 137,000 deaths. Stroke is estimated to cost our healthcare system \$73.7 billion in 2010. While 55,000 more women than men have a stroke each year, African Americans have almost twice the risk of first-ever stroke, compared with whites (1).

Now a new study (2) has found that olive oil, found in previous research to help with cholesterol health (3), help with cell damage and liver health (4), and bone health (5), may also help with stroke health. In the study, 7,625 participants from the Three-City Study (6) with no history of stroke provided diet information on three different levels of olive oil use:

- No use
- Moderate use - using olive oil for cooking or dressing alone
- Intensive use - using olive oil for both cooking and dressing

The study participants were followed up for an average of 5.25 years. The researchers also analyzed the olive oil intake data to estimate oleic acid intake. Oleic acid is a component of olive oil known to help prevent blood clotting (7).

The researchers found that, compared to those who never used olive oil, those with intensive use had a 41% lower risk of stroke ($p = 0.03$). In the secondary sample when they looked at oleic acid intake, those in the highest third of oleic acid intake more than 22% of total fatty acid intake from oleic acid) had a 73% reduced risk of stroke compared to the lowest third of oleic acid intake (less than 19% total fatty acid intake from oleic acid) ($p = 0.03$).

Although they admit that oleic acid intake "is not a specific marker of olive oil intake" and didn't quantify specific amounts of olive oil intake (i.e., tablespoons per day), the researchers concluded that "These results suggest a protective role for high olive oil consumption on the risk of stroke in older subjects."

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