

The inhibition of pro-inflammatory signals by flavan-3-ols and procyanidins in Inflammatory Bowel Disease

Inflammatory bowel diseases (IBD), including Crohn's disease (CD) and ulcerative colitis (UC), affect almost two million people in the US. IBD is characterized by a severe inflammatory condition in the gastrointestinal tract. Although inflammation is a normal protective mechanism, chronic inflammation in IBD results in tissue damage, dysfunction and disease. Because the origin of IBD is still not known, there is no cure, and scientists are trying to develop new therapies to control the progression of the disease. Both genetic and environmental factors, including diet contribute to the development of IBD. Dr. Patricia Orteiza's research group is investigating whether the consumption of diets with high content of select flavonoids can decrease inflammation, thereby protecting the intestine from damage. Positive results may lead to an improvement in the quality of life of patients with IBD simply through the inclusion in their diet of foods rich in select flavonoids.