

Fruit, vegetable concentrate decreases time spent with cold symptoms

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Remedy can reduce expenditures on medications in the long term.

Researchers at Charité - University Medicine Berlin were the first to show that a specific food supplement made from fruit and vegetable juice concentrates significantly reduced the number of days with severe cold symptoms. The report appears in the *British Journal of Nutrition*, published on behalf of the Nutrition Society by Cambridge University Press, and it sees the potential benefits of the product in a reduced number of sick days and correspondingly lower expenditure on cold medicines.

Researchers from the Institute of Social Medicine, Epidemiology and Health Economics, in cooperation with more than 500 employees of the Charité, as test participants, carried out an 8-month study on the effects of the preparation “Juice Plus+”, from the US-American supplier NSA from Collierville, Tennessee. In a randomised double-blind study, half the subjects took the drug daily, while the other half received a placebo. After just two months the results showed: The number of colds in both groups was equal. However, in the group that received the drug, the colds were much milder. As a result, there was a decrease of moderate and severe cold symptoms of about 20 per cent.

The question of whether the product is suitable for prolonged use, to reduce the severity of symptoms and the incidence of colds further, could be the subject of future studies of “Juice Plus+” according to the authors. Also unclear is the specific mode of action of the preparation.

"The results of the study are certainly encouraging because they show that certain dietary supplements may mitigate the burdens and consequences of the common cold," said Prof. Stefan Willich, Director of the Institute for Social Medicine, Epidemiology and Health Economics of Charité and head of the study.

The neutrality of the study was ensured by the fact that as a sponsor of the study, no study data were transmitted to the manufacturer of the preparation and they were also not involved in the interpretation of the study results.

More information: Stephanie Roll et al.: 'Reduction of common cold symptoms by encapsulated juice powder concentrate of fruits and vegetables: a randomised, double-blind, placebo-controlled trial.' *British Journal of Nutrition*, 23 August 2010, 1-5.

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Provided by Cambridge University

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