

The new frontier: Creating and marketing food products that prevent disease and obesity

July 17 2013

(Medical Xpress)—Creating and promoting foods that contain natural inhibitors of unhealthy angiogenesis – the formation of blood vessels that feed and promote disease, obesity and inflammation – is the "new frontier in dietary health," according to a presentation at the 2013 Institute of Food Technologists (IFT) Annual Meeting & Food Expo in Chicago.

"Blood vessels are critical to the health of every cell, every organ and for every function in the body," said William W. Li, M.D., president of the Angiogenesis Foundation. "Research is now showing it's possible to promote health and wellness using foods and beverages that influence angiogenesis."

Over 1 billion people throughout the world have an angiogenesis system that is "out of balance," said Dr. Li. These individuals either have, or are at risk for developing, abnormal blood vessel growth and related heart disease, cancer, arthritis, Alzheimer's disease, [obesity](#) and other diseases and conditions.

There are many antiangiogenic pharmaceutical products on the market today that are successfully fighting cancer and other diseases. Many foods have the same powerful, naturally-occurring properties including tomatoes, green tea, garlic, broccoli, dark chocolate, turmeric, tuna and olive oil.

"It's quite eye opening," said Dr. Li. "Food is the medicine we consume three times a day. Can we use the same process (to modulate [angiogenesis](#)) at an earlier stage in healthy individuals? Can we get away from drugs and medical devices?"

Recent studies have found that combining some of these foods like tomatoes and broccoli, heating some foods to a certain temperature (or not heating others), and/or cooking them in olive oil, may enhance their antiangiogenesis abilities. These findings could impact [food](#) design and preparation, said Vincent Li, MD, scientific director at the Angiogenesis Foundation.

"There is a clear global demand for 'functional foods' that provide health benefits beyond what is provided by their nutritive content," said Ravi Menon, Ph.D., senior principal scientist at the Bell Institute for Health & Nutrition at General Mills, Inc. in Minneapolis.

Developing these food products will require extensive tests in food safety and efficacy and comprehensive efforts to educate consumers on their health benefits, said Menon. In addition, "the current regulatory framework struggles to accommodate the expanding repertoire of [health benefits](#) in functional foods."

"The best way to conquer society's runaway health problems is to get in front of them by preventing them in the first place," said Dr. Li. "Dietary antiangiogenesis presents an opportunity for improving health at a time that is ripe for innovation."

Provided by Institute of Food Technologists

Citation: The new frontier: Creating and marketing food products that prevent disease and obesity (2013, July 17) retrieved 11 May 2024 from

<https://medicalxpress.com/news/2013-07-frontier-food-products-disease-obesity.html>

This document is subject to copyright. Apart from any fair dealing for the purpose of private study or research, no part may be reproduced without the written permission. The content is provided for information purposes only.