

Another 'whey' to improve your health in the New Year?

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Adding calcium, Vitamin D and prebiotic dietary fibre to a beverage made of whey can have huge health benefits for those who drink it, team of Lithuanian scientists has discovered.

Writing in *CyTA - Journal of Food*, Algirdas Liutkevičius and colleagues describe how they created – and tested – two different versions of a whey-based beverage. While both drinks had Vitamin D and prebiotic dietary fibre added, one was enriched with calcium phosphate, the other with calcium lactate.

The aim of the study was to determine how much their chosen health-giving additives would affect the 'physiochemical and sensory' qualities of the drinks, as well as what effects drinking them would have on the health of volunteers.

First, trained tasters – and then members of the public – passed judgement on both drinks' taste and appearance. While they found no appreciable difference in the visual appeal of the two formulas, the one made with [calcium phosphate](#) didn't taste as nice after periods of storage.

With taste being so important, only the formulation with [calcium](#) lactate was put to 30 volunteers against a control drink for further testing. As the researchers explain, it is essential that any 'functional beverage' taste good: "Sometimes [consumers](#) agree to compromise sensory attributes for other perceived benefits, such as nutritional value or country of origin of

the products. However, if the sensory attributes of the product do not meet consumers' expectations, it is unlikely that such product will be used again. Nowadays, consumers can find very different functional products with the same ingredients and the same effect on health, so [sensory properties](#) of products should meet consumers' expectations in order to encourage consumers to include the product in their diet."

And what about that effect on health? After 21 days of drinking the beverage, the volunteers' blood analysis showed a significant decrease in LDL-cholesterol (P

This open access study gives a fascinating insight into the design and production of today's 'functional beverages'. It also shows clearly the simple steps – like choosing a certain drink – we can take to improve our [health](#).

More information: Algirdas Liutkevičius et al. Development of a functional whey beverage, containing calcium, vitamin D, and prebiotic dietary fiber, and its influence on human health, *CyTA - Journal of Food* (2015). [DOI: 10.1080/19476337.2015.1108366](https://doi.org/10.1080/19476337.2015.1108366)

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