

The hidden power of Japanese food: Inhibiting the development of liver fibrosis

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Researchers analyzed the relationship between meals rated by the 12-component modified Japanese Diet Index (mJDI12), muscle mass, and liver fibrosis progression in 136 patients with nonalcoholic fatty liver disease (NAFLD) attending the Osaka Metropolitan University Hospital. Credit: Osaka Metropolitan University

Japanese food is popular worldwide and has been registered as a UNESCO Intangible Cultural Heritage. There is a scoring system called the 12-component modified Japanese Diet Index (mJDI12), which focuses on the intake of the Japanese diet pattern. It includes 12 foods and food groups: rice, miso soup, pickles, soy products, green and yellow vegetables, fruits, seafood, mushrooms, seaweed, green tea, coffee, and beef and pork. Scores range from 0 to 12, with higher scores indicating a diet that conforms to the Japanese food pattern.

A research group led by Dr. Hideki Fujii M.D. and Associate Professor Yoshinari Matsumoto at the Osaka Metropolitan University analyzed the relationship between meals rated by mJDI12, [muscle mass](#), and liver fibrosis progression in 136 patients with nonalcoholic fatty liver disease (NAFLD) attending the Osaka Metropolitan University Hospital. Their findings are published in the journal *Nutrients*.

The research group found the following: the group with a higher mJDI12 showed a lower degree of liver fibrosis progression. Moreover, among the Japanese diet patterns, a high intake of [soy products](#), [seafood](#), and seaweed showed a suppressive effect on liver fibrosis progression. In addition, the group with a higher intake of soy products had higher muscle mass, and the group with higher muscle mass had a lower degree of liver fibrosis progression.

"This study indicates that the Japanese diet pattern may be effective as a dietary treatment for NAFLD patients. We hope that further intervention studies will lead to the establishment of an effective diet for those patients," concluded Professor Matsumoto.

More information: Yoshinari Matsumoto et al, Severity of Liver Fibrosis Is Associated with the Japanese Diet Pattern and Skeletal Muscle Mass in Patients with Nonalcoholic Fatty Liver Disease, *Nutrients* (2023). [DOI: 10.3390/nu15051175](https://doi.org/10.3390/nu15051175)

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