

2nd International Conference on

NUTRACEUTICALS

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5th International Conference on

FOOD AND BEVERAGES

April 22-23, 2019 | Osaka, Japan



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Functional food between nutritional value and hormonal influences

Functional foods are foods that have a potentially positive effect on health beyond basic nutrition. Proponents of functional foods say they promote optimal health and help reduce the risk of disease. Functional foods range from cereals and bars enriched with folic acid to your average tomato or cup of green tea, while nutraceuticals are more commonly sold in pill form. The level of consumption of the food that is required to achieve a beneficial effect on health is an important consideration. In particular, it should be possible to achieve the required level of intake of the functional food or ingredient within normal dietary patterns. Often, a food is termed functional because it contains a high amount of phytochemicals. These natural, active plant chemicals have been found to boost health. Phytochemicals are plentiful in fruits, vegetables, whole grains, soy foods, and many herbs and spices (parsley, chives, garlic and ginger). The presence of antioxidants in a food is another reason it can be termed "functional". Antioxidants, such as vitamins A, C, E, and the mineral selenium, work to destroy harmful particles in the blood that can lead to heart problems and other

complications. Examples of foods with antioxidants include tea (catechins), wine or grape juice (resveratrol), berries (flavonoids such as quercetin), and maple syrup and citrus foods (flavonoids/limonoids). Functional foods may provide benefits in health terms, but should not be seen as an alternative to a varied and balanced diet and a healthy lifestyle. In order to maximize health and wellbeing, Functional foods do not provide a miracle solution to health problems but may be useful to some people as part of a healthy diet and lifestyle. Examples of functional foods that have hormonal effects, especially on sex hormones, are maple syrup, where it was found to be the administration of fortified meal with maple syrup (especially, at higher concentration 20 ml followed 10 ml) improved the primarily at the sperm parameters, hormones parameters level and activities of antioxidant enzymes that may be due to effect of sodium valproate on endocrine function in male rats. The high amount of phenolic and flavonoid compounds is likely to be responsible for the higher antioxidant activity of the maple syrup.

Biography

Ahmed O Shalaby is the Vice Dean of Faculty of Tourism and Hotels of Education and Student Affairs since 2016. He is the former Professor of nutrition and food science, Home Economic Department, Faculty of specific education, Mansoura University from 2003-2008. He is the Professor of food science, Home Economic Department, Faculty of specific education, Mansoura University since 2008. He is member of Supreme Managerial Committee for quality assurance project since 2009 and Head of Home Economics and small industries unit in General Service Center for educational and technical service since 2005. He is the former Director of Faculty of Specific Education 2009 to 2010. He is also the former Director of Faculty of Specific Education from 2012 to 2013 and Head of department of Hotel Studies, Faculty of Tourism and Hotels 2014 to 2015. He is the Member of board of directors of open education - Faculty of Tourism and Hotels since 2014.

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