

Eating citrus lowers women's stroke risk

WASHINGTON: Women who regularly eat citrus fruits such as oranges and grapefruit may have a lower risk of blood-clot related stroke, according to a US study published on Thursday, 23 February 2012.



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Researchers looked at 14 years of data from a US nurses survey that included 69 622 women who report what they ate, including details on fruit and vegetable consumption, every four years.

The aim was to study the effects of flavonoids, a class of compounds present in fruits, vegetables, dark chocolate and red wine, on health.

While total flavonoid consumption across all six main types found in the typical US diet did not show a benefit in preventing stroke, those who ate lots of oranges and grapefruit and their derived juices showed 19% lower stroke risk than their counterparts in the study.

"Studies have shown higher fruit, vegetable and specifically vitamin C intake is associated with reduced stroke risk," said Aedin Cassidy, lead author of the study in the *Stroke: Journal of the American Heart Association*.

"Flavonoids are thought to provide some of that protection through several mechanisms, including improved blood vessel function and an anti-inflammatory effect," added Cassidy, a professor of nutrition at Norwich Medical School in the University of East Anglia.

The researchers called for more studies to better understand the apparent link, and urged women to consume oranges and grapefruit rather than their juices to avoid high sugar content from drink additives.

Previous research has suggested that citrus-derived flavonoids may help prevent weight gain and metabolic syndrome which can lead to Type 2 diabetes and higher risk of heart disease.

Source: AFP