

Special Issue

The Potential Health Effects of Dietary Phytoestrogens

Message from the Guest Editor

Phytoestrogens are weak estrogens produced by plants which have shown reproductive effects in animals and human beings. These estrogenic effects can be either beneficial or adverse according to the physiological status of the consumers. In estrogen deficiencies, they can be of help; in estrogen-dependent pathologies such as estrogen-dependent cancers, they can have adverse effects. When they are physiologically without need—in infancy, adolescence or male reproduction—they are better avoided.

Because estrogens exhibit ubiquitous effects through their nuclear or membrane receptors, they are known to act on many tissues. Consequently, estrogens may be involved as protectants or deleterious factors in multifactorial chronic diseases such as obesity, diabetes, and cardiovascular diseases. Some phytoestrogens can also interact with other functions like thyroid control or immunity.

This Issue deals with the health effects of phytoestrogens observed in humans, either in population studies or through documented clinical research. Additionally, data collected from animals or in vitro at relevant doses are provided to highlight the mechanisms of action of these phytoestrogens.

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Nutrients is an on-line open access journal that was first published in 2009. *Nutrients* adheres to rigorous peer-review and editorial processes and publishes only high quality manuscripts that address important issues related to the impacts of nutrients on human health. The Impact Factor of *Nutrients* has risen rapidly since its establishment and it is now ranked in the first quartile of journals publishing in the field of nutrition and dietetics research.

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