

Eating dry fruits may prevent cognitive decline in the elderly

02 December 2019 | News | By Sonali Wankhade

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A recent study, funded by the International Nut and Dried Fruit council (INC) and published in *Molecular Nutrition & Food Research*, shows that high consumption of dried fruit can protect older people from cognitive decline.

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119 participants, at least 65 years old and suffering from dementia, were selected in the InCHIANTI cohort, which includes a representative sample of elderly residents of Chianti in Italy. The latter were chosen according to their consumption of dried fruit: non-consumers and regular consumers (2.9 g / day).

Dry fruit exposure was measured at the beginning of the study using a validated food frequency questionnaire or an analytical tool for characterization of phenolic compounds. In addition, cognitive decline was assessed using the Mini-Mental State Examination test.

The researchers found that out of 119 subjects, 38 had cognitive decline: 28 in the group of non-consumers of dried fruits and 10 in the group of consumers. Dry fruit consumption estimated by the dietary marker or the urinary marker model was in both cases associated with lower cognitive decline.

"The use of a panel of metabolites provides accurate and complementary information on exposure to dried fruits and strengthens the results obtained through dietary data," says Professor Andrés-Lacueva, ICREA Academia of the University of

Barcelona, head of the *CIBERFES* group *on frailty and aging in good health* and principal investigator of the study.

This study was funded by INC.