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Goats' Milk Is More Beneficial To Health Than Cows' Milk, Study Suggests

Science Daily — Researchers have carried out a comparative study on the properties of goats' milk compared to those of cows' milk. They found reason to believe that goats' milk could help prevent diseases such as anemia and bone demineralization. Goats' milk was found to help with the digestive and metabolic utilization of minerals such as iron, calcium, phosphorus and magnesium.

Research carried out at the Department of Physiology of the University of Granada has revealed that goat milk has more beneficial properties to health than cow milk. Among these properties it helps to prevent ferropenic anaemia (iron deficiency) and bone demineralisation (softening of the bones).

This project, conducted by Doctor Javier Díaz Castro and directed by professors Margarita Sánchez Campos, M^a Inmaculada López Aliaga and M^a José Muñoz Alférez, focuses on the comparison between the nutritional properties of goat milk and cow milk, both with normal calcium content and calcium enriched, against the bioavailability of iron, calcium, phosphorus and magnesium. To carry out this study, the metabolic balance technique has been used both in rats with experimentally induced nutritional ferropenic anaemia and in a control group.

In order to know how the nutritive utilisation of these minerals may affect their metabolic distribution and destination, the UGR researcher has determined the concentration of these minerals in the different organs involved in their homeostatic regulation and different haematological parameters in relation to the metabolic use of the minerals.

Better results with goat milk

Results obtained in the study reveal that ferropenic anaemia and bone demineralisation caused by this pathology have a better recovery with goat milk to the higher bioavailability of iron, calcium, phosphorus and magnesium, the restoration of altered haematological parameters and the better levels of parathyroid hormone (PTH), a hormone that regulates the calcium balance in the organism was found in the rats that consumed this food.

Javier Díaz Castro points out that the inclusion of goat milk with normal or double calcium content in the diet "favours digestive and metabolic utilisation of iron, calcium and phosphorus and their deposit in target organs - parts of the organism to which these minerals are preferably sent - involved in their homeostatic regulation".

According to this researcher, all these conclusions reveal that regular consumption of goat milk – a natural food with highly beneficial nutritional characteristics - "has positive effects on mineral metabolism, recovery from ferropenic anaemia and bone mineralisation in rats. In addition, and unlike observations in cow milk, its calcium enrichment does not interfere in the bioavailability of the minerals studied."

Although there is no doubt that these findings may be a base for further in depth study of the multiple health benefits of goat milk, the UGR researcher warns that "studies in humans are still required in order to confirm the findings obtained in rats and to promote goat milk consumption both in the general population and in the population affected by nutritional ferropenic anaemia and pathologies related to bone demineralisation." Part of the results of this research has been published in the International Dairy Journal and Journal Dairy Science.

Note: This story has been adapted from a news release issued by University of Granada.

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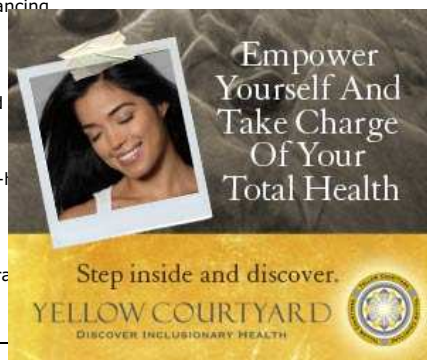
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