

A new study shows that elderly women who consume the most flavonoids, compounds found in tea, chocolate, red wine, and fruits and vegetables, have lower cardiovascular, cancer and all-cause mortality rates.

Higher flavonoid intake is associated with lower mortality rate in older women

Flavonoids are phytonutrients (plant nutrients) found in tea, chocolate, red wine and many fruits and vegetables. Reduced mortality from vascular disease and some cancers have been linked to high intakes of flavonoid-rich foods and specific flavonoid intake.

In a new study, published in the *American Journal of Clinical Nutrition*, researchers explored the potential association between overall flavonoid intake and the risk of all-cause mortality.

The study participants included 1,063 women over the age of 75 years. Flavonoid intake was estimated using two different sets of food data: the USDA and the Phenol-Explorer database. Over a five-year follow-up there were 129 deaths in the study group. All-cause, cancer, and cardiovascular deaths were determined.

Women with the highest flavonoid intake (per USDA) had a 63 percent lower risk of all-cause mortality over the five-year follow-up than those with the lowest flavonoid intake. Those with the highest flavonoid intake also had a 66 percent lower risk of cardiovascular death, and a 75 percent lower risk of cancer mortality. The results were nearly identical when using the Phenol-Explorer database to determine flavonoid intake.

Using the two most comprehensive flavonoid databases available, this study provides evidence that a higher intake of flavonoids is linked to all-cause mortality in older women, and even more so to cardiovascular and cancer mortality.

Kerry L Ivey, Jonathan M Hodgson, Kevin D Croft, Joshua R Lewis, and Richard L Prince. Flavonoid intake and all-cause mortality Am J Clin Nutr May 2015 vol. 101 no. 5 1012-1020