Conjugated Linoleic Acid

Overview

- Numerous animal studies link conjugated linoleic acid (CLA) with reduced risk of cancer, atherosclerosis, and diabetes.
- CLA also influences immune function & body composition.
- However, despite the numerous health benefits seen in CLA-fed animals, health effects of CLA in humans remain controversial.

Where is CLA found?

Biological synthesis of CLA actually occurs through the microbial isomerization of dietary linoleic acid in the digestive tract of ruminant animals, making ruminant species and their products the richest dietary sources of CLA.

Pennington Biomedical Research Center

Mission

To promote healthier lives through research and education in nutrition and preventative medicine.

From the Pennington Center

CLA has been shown to reduce body fat in mice, as well as in rats and chickens. Pennington Biomedical Research Center (PBRC) has conducted several studies on CLA-fed mice. In two studies, feeding CLA to mice produced rapid, sustained reductions in fat accumulation at relatively low doses without any major effects on food intake. This loss of fat was attributed to significant increases in the energy expenditures of the CLA-fed mice, and effects were seen rapidly (within 1 week of CLA treatment). The results indicate that CLA has a positive effect on energy expenditure in mice.

The major dietary sources of CLA for humans are beef and dairy products.

Which foods should I choose?

Dairy products such as milk, yogurt, cheese and sour cream have the highest levels of CLA. However, lamb, beef, veal and turkey also are good sources of CLA.

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