

Abstract

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Dietary plant sterols and cholesterol metabolism.

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Plant sterols, naturally occurring in foods of plant origin, reduce cholesterol absorption.

Experimental studies show plant sterols to be an important part of the serum-cholesterol lowering effect of certain diets and dietary components. Epidemiological data show that individuals with higher intakes of plant sterols from their habitual diets have lower serum-cholesterol levels. To date, the role of naturally occurring plant sterols for lowering serum cholesterol has probably been underestimated. The consumption of dietary plant sterols should be a part of dietary advice to patients with hypercholesterolemia and the general public for the prevention and management of coronary heart disease.

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