



Cancer study finds extra virgin olive oil can prevent intestinal tumor development

A diet containing extra virgin olive oil and subsequently oleic acid can prevent the development of intestinal tumors, according to a study supported by the Italian association for cancer research, AIRC.

The research study was carried out by Antonio Moschetta, Professor of Internal Medicine, and his team at the University of Bari in Puglia, southern Italy—a region also known as the country's largest producer of extra virgin olive oil in terms of quantity.

Published in the November 2018 issue of *Gastroenterology*, the most prominent journal in the field of gastrointestinal disease, the study concluded that a diet enriched with oleic acid reduced intestinal inflammation and a significantly lower tumor burden compared to one without extra virgin olive oil and consequently without oleic acid.

In the study, the researchers inactivated the gene that encodes the intestinal enzyme SCD1, which regulates the production of oleic acid in our body. The absence of the monounsaturated fat led to inflammation and the development of spontaneous tumors but enriching the diet with oleic acid saw normal intestinal physiology restored.

According to Professor Moschetta, exploiting the beneficial properties of oleic acid will make it possible to one day reduce the onset of tumors, especially in patients with intestinal inflammation, and enhance the anti-cancer treatments already in use.

President of Italia Olivicola Gennaro Sicolo told Milan-based newspaper *Il Giornale* that the amazing results of the study testify to how the daily consumption of Italian extra virgin olive oil, thanks to its high level of oleic acids, is a panacea for the life of all of us.

The head of the largest Italian association of olive growers also added that Italy has a duty to protect and promote this very important product.

Oleic acid can be found naturally in numerous food sources, notably in extra virgin olive oil which boasts a range of 55-83% of this beneficial monosaturated fatty acid. Among all available olive oils, Italian olive oils are said to contain the highest level of oleic acid, regardless of the cultivar or genetic heritage of the Italian olives used.

The international TAICHI project is spreading the word about the growing awareness of the health benefits of using extra virgin olive oil for cooking to Mainland China and Taiwan.

Co-funded by the EU and promoted by the two main consortia of Italian olive growers, Italia Olivicola and UNAPOL, the TAICHI project offers consumers all the information they need to understand olive oil through its website, various social media platforms and OurOliveOil APP – available in the [App Store](#) and [Google Play](#).



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Sources:

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