

The anti-carcinogenic and anti-atherogenic effects of lycopene: a review

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Abstract:

Considerable evidence from several epidemiological studies suggests that lycopene has anti-carcinogenic and anti-atherogenic potential, the effects of which have been attributed primarily to its antioxidant properties (lycopene quenches singlet oxygen almost twice as well as β -carotene does). These epidemiological leads have stimulated a number of animal model and cell culture studies designed to test this hypothesis and to establish its beneficial effects. This review will focus on the anti-atherogenic and anti-carcinogenic effects of lycopene, and point out areas for future research to further elucidate mechanisms whereby this compound may reduce cancer and cardiovascular disease risk.