

http://www.resource-online.nl/wb_artikel.php?r=1&id=1319

WB ARCHIEF/ WISPR

17 FEBRUARY 2005

VITAMIN K2 PROTECTS AGAINST HEART ATTACKS

A vitamin in cheese and yoghurt, that most people have never heard of, delays calcification of the arteries (atherosclerosis). Vitamin K2 does this so well that substantial amounts of it give as much protection against heart attacks as the recommended daily glass of wine. A Wageningen researcher is behind it.

Dr Marianne Geleijnse of the sub-department of Human Nutrition devoted attention years ago to analyzing data that had been collected from five thousand people over a ten year period. Geleijnse examined the relation between atherosclerosis and heart attacks on the one hand and vitamins K1 and K2 on the other.

‘In vitamin K1, which is found in green vegetables and vegetable oils, we found nothing,’ says Geleijnse. ‘But the relation with K2 was very strong. People who had had large quantities of vitamin K2 were only half as likely to have a heart attack or serious atherosclerosis.’ According to Geleijnse’s results, the protective effect of high doses of K2 is about the same as that of moderate alcohol consumption.

‘If K2 is as important as it seems to be for well functioning heart and blood vessels then it may explain why avid cheese eaters do not die more of heart and circulatory disease,’ says Geleijnse. ‘If you know how much saturated fats cheese contains, you would expect that high levels of cheese consumption would go together with more heart attacks. But no such relation is found in the statistics. Maybe this is because K2 compensates for the negative effects of saturated fats.’ / WK