

Food and Health Longevity

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Japan occupies the first or the second position in the average life expectancy and the average health expectancy in the world. But, with an increase of imported foods and with the Western way of food-style, the incidence of lifestyle related diseases continues to rise. In particular, the excess intake of fat, sugar and energy, induces the metabolic syndrome through the obesity and follows to diabetic, cardiovascular and cerebrovascular diseases. It has been demonstrated that the food-style contributes not only to physical conditions, but also to mental conditions. As the ratio of people over 65 years old in our country will reach 20% of all population near future, the Ministry of Health, Labor and Welfare settled on “Healthy Japan 21” in 2000. Furthermore, “Health Promotion Law” and “Food Education Basic Law” were enacted in 2003 and in 2005, respectively. Since 1985, the functional food science has been developed in Japan and in the United States, also in European countries. As the results, functional foods act as nutrients, tastants/odorants and body modulating agents. Therefore, food-style is very important factor to keep our growth-up, health maintenance and anti-aging as well as exercise, rest and anti-stress factors. Recently, “Food Guide Pyramid” in the United States and “Food Balance Guide” in Japan have been settled and recommended. In this presentation, the food safety and the reciprocal action between foods and medicines will be also discussed.