

Levels of Ochratoxin A in Blood from Norwegian and Swedish Blood Donors: Estimated Intake and Correlation between Blood Levels and Food Consumption Habits

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ABSTRACT

To study the influence of dietary habits on exposure to ochratoxin A, blood levels of the toxin were determined in 400 Scandinavian blood donors, using a HPLC method. In conjunction with the bloodletting, the subjects were asked to fill in a food questionnaire. No strong correlation was found between plasma levels of the toxin and the intake of various foods. However, low but statistically significant correlations were seen for some food items, including red wine, certain kinds of bread, chickpeas, roast pork and liver paste either in the Norwegian (Oslo) or the Swedish (Visby) study population. It was also found that individuals with the highest plasma levels of the toxin consumed relatively more of certain foods, including red wine, coffee, beer and certain types of bread and other cereal products, as compared to individuals with low plasma levels.