

Book description

Many phenolics in foods and beverages are reported to have antioxidant capacities that are much higher than those of vitamin C and E, and even those of currently available synthetic antioxidants such as butylated hydroxyl toluene. In addition, phenolics in foods have other advantages over the other antioxidants, since they are water-soluble and are therefore excreted by the body; unlike the fat-based vitamin E, which is absorbed and retained even at potentially harmful levels. Tea is rich in polyphenols and its potential health benefits have largely been ascribed to the antioxidant activity of this group of molecules. The antioxidant potency of tea will, however, vary with type of tea product, cultivar type from which it is derived and even region where the tea was grown. Though green tea generally has the highest levels of catechins, total polyphenols and total antioxidant capacity, black teas processed from suitable cultivars could be as potent in antioxidant activity as the former. White tea (silvery tip), a rare specialty type of tea, is not significantly different from green tea in its composition and antioxidant capacity.