



## Unit 13 Olive Oil: Extraction and Classification

### ✦ Glossary

**Intake:** an amount of food, air, or other substance taken into the body

**Strength:** a good quality

**Findings:** information discovered

**Trial:** a test



### Mental health benefits of olive oil

It is common knowledge that olive oil and the Mediterranean diet have a multitude of health benefits. But what about emotional health benefits? According to Spanish researchers from the University of Navarra and Las Palmas de Gran Canaria, a diet rich in olive oil can protect people from mental illness. The study included 12,059 volunteers who were part of the SUN Project, a prospective study of Spanish university graduates, aimed at identifying the dietary determinants of stroke, coronary disease and other disorders. The researchers followed these volunteers for over 6 years and gathered data on lifestyle factors such as diet as well as their medical history. At the beginning of the study none of the volunteers suffered from depression, and by the end of the study, 657 new cases of depression were detected.

The data that was gathered revealed that volunteers who had a high **intake** of trans fats and hydrogenated fat found mainly in processed foods had up to 48% increased risk of depression compared to volunteers who did not consume these fats. This information is based on the studies published by Almudena Sánchez-Villegas, Associate Professor of Preventive Medicine at the University of Las Palmas de Gran Canaria. In addition, the researchers discovered that a higher intake of olive oil and polyunsaturated fats found in fatty fish and vegetable oils was associated with a lower risk of depression. According to the researchers these findings suggest that cardiovascular disease and depression may share some common mechanisms related to diet.

This is not the first time that olive oil and the Mediterranean diet have been associated with lower rates of depression. In 2009, Spanish researchers once again discovered that individuals who followed a Mediterranean style diet rich in olive oil, vegetables, beans and fruit were 30% less likely to suffer from depression.

While the researchers point out that there were certain limitations to the study, such as analyzing the diet only at the beginning of the study, they point to several

**strengths** such as a large sample size as well as multiple adjustments for potential mistakes. They add that the **findings** need to be confirmed by further prospective studies and through **trials**.

[Adapted from: Mental Health Benefits of Olive Oil, [www.oliveoiltimes.com](http://www.oliveoiltimes.com), 2014]





**Understanding the text**

**1. 1. Read the text and find verbs that are associated with the following terms and expressions.**

- 1. .... dietary determinants
- 2. .... depression
- 3. .... data
- 4. .... fats
- 5. .... a diet
- 6. .... limitations

**2. Choose the correct answer.**

- 1. The objective of the research carried out in Spain was to discover the relationship between:
  - a.  diet and mental problems
  - b.  food and some serious diseases such as cancer
  - c.  food consumption and social status
- 2. The research focused on:
  - a.  lifestyle and age
  - b.  food consumption and health conditions
  - c.  lifestyle and medical history
- 3. At the beginning of the study:
  - a.  all the volunteers suffered from depression
  - b.  none of the volunteers suffered from depression
  - c.  almost half of the volunteers suffered from depression
- 4. The research revealed that the risk of depression in relation to the consumption of certain fats could:
  - a.  increase slightly
  - b.  did not increase at all
  - c.  increase significantly
- 5. It was discovered that olive oil and polyunsaturated fats may:
  - a.  contribute to the general well-being
  - b.  decrease the risk of all kinds of mental illnesses
  - c.  reduce the risk of depression
- 6. A previous study had revealed that the Mediterranean diet decreased the risk of depression by:
  - a.  40%
  - b.  48%
  - c.  30%



**Writing**

**3. Write a paragraph of 30/40 words about olive oil consumption in your family. Focus on the following elements:**

- type of oil consumed (extra virgin, virgin etc.);
- use (raw, for cooking / frying etc.);
- approximate amount consumed annually.

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