

Media Release

Chiefs of Staff, News Directors

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Study “seas” what impact extract might have on blood sugar

Researchers in the University of Tasmania’s Division of Pharmacy are undertaking a study to investigate whether fucoidan, a commercially available seaweed extract, has an effect on blood sugar and other markers of heart and metabolic health.

Researcher Cameron Wright said the study would assess whether fucoidan affects blood glucose control, specifically insulin sensitivity, and how the body tolerates a dose of sugar (assessed through something called an oral glucose tolerance test).

At the start of the three-month trial participants will be randomly allocated to receive either one seaweed capsule or a placebo capsule twice daily. They will then take this capsule for the duration of the study.

Mr Wright said participants will visit the University for an initial screening visit and on two additional occasions over the three month period (at the beginning and again at the end of the trial).

“At each visit participants will have been asked to fast overnight and on arrival, blood pressure, height, waist circumference and weight will be measured, a fasting blood glucose level will be taken by finger prick method and a blood sample taken for cholesterol, lipid (fat), insulin and glucose levels, as well as standard tests for body functioning,” he said.

“Participants will then be given a sucrose (sugar) drink and blood glucose levels will be measured over a two hour period at regular intervals following the drink.”

Each visit will take around three hours and refreshments will be offered afterwards.

Mr Wright said the team was keen to see what the study might reveal.

“We will compare the results of those participants taking the seaweed extract to those taking the placebo capsules and may find out that the seaweed extract has a measurable impact relative to placebo.

“We are hoping to source some more research participants who can assist us in finding out more.”

Eligibility: For this study the team is looking for non-smokers aged between 18 and 65 years, with a body mass index equal to or greater than 30, who do not have diabetes or a family history of diabetes (parents or siblings), are not taking more than five regular medications or any anticoagulant medications. **Study participants will be compensated for their time on completion of the study.**

For more information or to register to participate, please contact: Cameron Wright (03) 6226 1096, email: utasfucoidan@gmail.com or visit www.utas.edu.au/umore/research/participate/fucoidan-study

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