Influence of tart cherry juice on indices of recovery following marathon running

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ABSTRACT
This investigation determined the efficacy of a tart cherry juice in aiding recovery and reducing muscle damage, inflammation and oxidative stress. Twenty recreational Marathon runners assigned to either consumed cherry juice or placebo for 5 days before, the day of and for 48 h following a Marathon run. Markers of muscle damage (creatine kinase, lactate dehydrogenase, muscle soreness and isometric strength), inflammation [interleukin-6 (IL-6), C-reactive protein (CRP) and uric acid], total antioxidant status (TAS) and oxidative stress [thiobarbituric acid reactive species (TBARS) and protein carbonyls] were examined before and following the race. Isometric strength recovered significantly faster (P=0.024) in the cherry juice group. No other damage indices were significantly different. Inflammation was reduced in the cherry juice group (IL-6, P<0.001; CRP, P<0.01; uric acid, P<0.05). TAS was ~10% greater in the cherry juice than the placebo group for all post-supplementation measures (P<0.05). Protein carbonyls was not different; however, TBARS was lower in the cherry juice than the placebo at 48 h (P<0.05). The cherry juice appears to provide a viable means to aid recovery following strenuous exercise by increasing total antioxidative capacity, reducing inflammation, lipid peroxidation and so aiding in the recovery of muscle function.