

Bioavailability of orange juice (poly)phenols: the impact of short-term cessation of training by male endurance athletes

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Running heading: Exercise and bioavailability of flavanones

Abbreviations: BMI, body mass index; HPLC-PDA-HR-MS, high performance liquid chromatography–photodiode array–high resolution-mass spectrometry; $\dot{V}O_2$ max, maximal oxygen consumption.

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1 **ABSTRACT**

2 **Background:** Physical exercise has been reported to increase the bioavailability of
3 citrus flavanones.

4 **Objective:** To investigate the bioavailability of orange juice (OJ) (poly)phenols in
5 endurance-trained men before and after cessation of training for 7 days.

6 **Design:** Ten fit endurance-trained males, with a maximal oxygen consumption of 58.2
7 \pm 5.3 mL/kg/min, followed a low (poly)phenol diet for 2 d before drinking 500 mL of
8 OJ, containing 398 μ mol of (poly)phenols of which 330 μ mol were flavanones. After the
9 volunteers stopped training for 7 days the feeding study was repeated. Urine samples
10 were collected 12 h pre- and 24 h post-OJ orange consumption. Bioavailability was
11 assessed by the quantitative analysis of urinary flavanone metabolites and
12 (poly)phenol catabolites using HPLC-HR-MS.

13 **Results:** While training, 0-24 h urinary excretion of flavanone metabolites, mainly
14 hesperetin-3'-*O*-glucuronide, hesperetin-3'-sulfate, naringenin-4'-*O*-glucuronide,
15 naringenin-7-*O*-glucuronide, was equivalent to 4.2% of OJ flavanone intake. This
16 increased significantly to 5.2% when OJ was consumed after the volunteers stopped
17 training for 7 days. Overall, this trend, although not significant, was also observed with
18 OJ-derived colonic catabolites which after supplementation in the trained state were
19 excreted in amounts equivalent to 51% of intake compared to 59% after cessation of
20 training. However, urinary excretion of three colonic catabolites of bacterial origin,
21 most notably, 3-(3'-hydroxy-4'-methoxyphenyl)hydracrylic acid, did increase
22 significantly when OJ was consumed post- compared to pre-cessation of training. Data
23 were also obtained on inter-individual variations in flavanone bioavailability.

24 **Conclusion:** A 7-day cessation of endurance training enhanced, rather than reduced,
25 the bioavailability of OJ flavanones. The biological significance of these differences
26 and, whether or not they extend to the bioavailability of other dietary (poly)phenols,
27 remains to be determined. Hesperetin-3'-*O*-glucuronide and the colonic microbiota-
28 derived catabolite 3-(3'-hydroxy-4'-methoxyphenyl)hydracrylic acid are key
29 biomarkers of the consumption of hesperetin-*O*-glycoside-containing OJ and other
30 citrus products.

31

32 **Key words:** orange juice flavanones, endurance-trained athletes, cessation of training,
33 urinary metabolites and catabolites, biomarkers of hesperetin intake

34 INTRODUCTION

35 Citrus fruits and their juices are the principal dietary source of flavanones (1). Population-
36 based data have linked increased citrus fruit consumption to a reduced risk of stroke (2) and
37 some types of cancer (3, 4). There is evidence that this is due to a high flavanones intake (5, 6).
38 Orange juice (OJ) is one of the main dietary sources of flavanones with the major components
39 being hesperetin-7-*O*-rutinoside (hesperidin) and naringenin-7-*O*-rutinoside (narirutin) (1).
40 Other studies have found that regular consumption of OJ brings about an improvement in
41 vascular function (7, 8), inhibits oxidative stress and inflammatory responses (9) and has a
42 positive effect on metabolic, oxidative and inflammatory biomarkers of health status in normal
43 and overweight subjects (10). Furthermore, it has been reported that daily consumption of OJ
44 containing at least 300 mg (~500 μ mol) of flavanones for a period of 12 weeks, enhanced the
45 antioxidant defence system, protected against DNA damage and lipid peroxidation, and reduced
46 blood pressure in overweight and obese adults (11). In addition, administration of a flavanone-
47 rich aronia-citrus juice to triathlon athletes for a period of almost 21 weeks decreased
48 isoprostane markers of oxidative stress (12).

49 An understanding of the metabolic fate of flavanones in the body is a prerequisite for
50 elucidating the mode of action underlying the protective effects of OJ and citrus consumption in
51 general. Ingested flavanones begin to be absorbed as phase II metabolites in the small intestine
52 but ~70% of ingested flavanones reach the large intestine (13) where, as well as continuing to be
53 absorbed as phase II metabolites, they are subjected to ring fission by the action of the resident
54 microbiota and broken down to phenolic catabolites (14-16) which enter the circulatory system,
55 with a portion undergoing phase II metabolism in colonocytes and/or hepatocytes prior to renal
56 excretion (17). In a recent OJ feeding study, in addition to a ~16% urinary recovery of
57 hesperetin and naringenin metabolites, the quantity of colon-derived phenolic compounds

58 detected in urine was equivalent to ~88% of flavanone intake, demonstrating that flavanone
59 bioavailability is much higher than previously perceived (18).

60 In the context of physical training status and flavanone bioavailability, it has been reported
61 that urinary excretion of flavanone metabolites by triathletes, after drinking an aronia (5%)-
62 citrus (95%) juice, was ~ 5-fold higher than that of more sedentary volunteers (19). Exercise
63 training, induces several physiological changes including reduced whole bowel transit time (20)
64 and enhanced muscle blood flow (21), which would be expected to reduce rather than increase
65 flavanone bioavailability. The impact of exercise on flavanone bioavailability is potentially
66 complex and requires further investigation. Cessation of training by physically active individuals
67 provides a useful model to study the physiological effects of exercise (22), and the objective of
68 this study was to determine the impact of a 7-day detraining period on the bioavailability of OJ
69 (poly)phenols in endurance-trained male athletes.

70

71 **SUBJECTS AND METHODS**

72 **Chemicals and materials**

73 The chemicals used in the study and their sources were as described previously by Pereira-
74 Caro et al. (17). Synthetic urine (Negative Urine Control) was purchased from Sigma-Aldrich,
75 Madrid, Spain).

76 **Participants**

77 Eligible participants of this study were endurance trained men with body mass index (BMI)
78 < 25 kg/m² and maximal oxygen consumption ($\dot{V}O_{2max}$) \geq 51.0 ml/kg/min. They were recruited
79 by advertisements and word of mouth in the campus of the University of Glasgow and in other
80 public places. Participants were non-smokers, with stable weight for one month prior to study

81 enrolment, and were not on any medication, nutritional supplement or special diet. Before
82 enrolling in the study, participants underwent a detailed health screen regarding participant's
83 health to exclude chronic illness, eating disorders and history of gastrointestinal diseases which
84 could interfere with the results of the study. All participants gave written informed consent. The
85 Ethics Committee of the College of Medical, Veterinary and Life Sciences, Glasgow University
86 approved the study which was registered at ClinicalTrials.gov (NCT02627547).

87

88 **Screening procedures and cardiorespiratory fitness assessment**

89 During the screening sessions $\dot{V}O_2\text{max}$ tests were carried out to ensure that participants
90 had a high level of cardiorespiratory fitness for their age group and, thus, could be classified as
91 endurance-trained athletes. A $\dot{V}O_2\text{max} \geq 51.0$ ml/kg/min, which refers to fitness excellence (23),
92 was considered as the main inclusion criterion. Prior to this test participants completed Health
93 Screening and Physical Activity Readiness Questionnaires and had their height (Seca, Leicester,
94 UK), weight, body fat (TBF-300, TANITA, Cranlea, UK) and BMI calculated.

95 The $\dot{V}O_2\text{max}$ assessment involved a continuous incremental exercise test to volitional
96 exhaustion and was performed at 20-21°C with a relative humidity of 30-40% (24). The test was
97 conducted on either a motorized treadmill (PPS Med, Woodway, Germany) or a cycle-ergometer
98 (HP Cosmos Cyclus 2 Record-trainer, Nussdorf-Traunstein, Germany), depending on the
99 participant's type of training. Preceding the test, participants were fitted with a heart rate
100 monitor (Polar Sports Tester, Polar Electro Oy, Kempele, Finland) and were advised to warm up.
101 During the treadmill test the participants began with a warm up period of 6 min at a speed of 8
102 km/h. After the warm up phase, running speed was gradually increased by 1 km/h every minute
103 until participants reached exhaustion. During the cycle ergometer test participants were asked

104 to choose a familiar and comfortable pedalling rate greater than 60 rpm and to maintain it
105 throughout the test. The 4 min warm up period at 100 W was followed by gradual increases in
106 power output of 25 W every min until 200 W was reached at which point power output was
107 increased by 25 W every 2 min until participants reached volitional exhaustion. During tests
108 collection of expired gas was initiated when a significant increase in ventilation and heart rate
109 was achieved; our experience and judgement was used to determine when the subject would
110 reach exhaustion. Verbal encouragement was given to participants throughout the test.
111 Exhaustion was defined as the time at which the subjects were no longer able to maintain the
112 prescribed running speed or pedalling rate. Expired gas samples were collected using the
113 Douglas bag technique (25) and heart rate and rating of perceived exertion (26) were recorded
114 during 2-3 final stages of the test. Expired gas samples were analysed for O₂% and CO₂% (4100
115 Gas Purity Analyzer, Servomex, UK) volume (Dry gas meter, Harvard, Kent, UK), and
116 temperature. Barometric pressure was measured using a standard mercury barometer. Oxygen
117 consumption ($\dot{V}O_2$) values were derived using Haldane transformation (27). The $\dot{V}O_2$ value
118 obtained during the last expired gas collection was taken as the $\dot{V}O_{2max}$ value.

119

120 **Study design**

121 Each subject participated in two 24 h OJ feeding trials: one during a period of normal
122 training, the other immediately following 1 week of an absence of training. Participants were
123 requested to maintain their normal training program during the week leading up to the first OJ
124 feeding trial (trained state), and to ensure that they trained on the preceding day. They were
125 asked to refrain from any training prior to a second OJ feeding trial (detrained state).
126 Participants weighed and recorded their dietary intake and were asked to follow a diet low in

127 (poly)phenolic compounds by avoiding fruits and vegetables, chocolate, nuts, high-fibre
128 products, and beverages such as tea, coffee and fruit juices, as well as to abstain from consuming
129 alcohol, for the 2 days prior to their first OJ feeding trial in the trained state and to replicate their
130 diet during the 2 days prior to the feeding trial in the detrained state.

131 On the morning of the OJ feeding trials, participants reported to the metabolic suite
132 between 0800 and 0900 h after a 12-h fast and brought their 12 h excreted overnight urine
133 sample. Height, body mass and body fat were measured. Participants then consumed 500 mL of
134 OJ (Tropicana "With Bits"), homogeneity of samples was ensured by mixing and freezing in bulk
135 and, except for water intake to maintain adequate levels of hydration, no other food or drink was
136 allowed for the next 4 h. Four hours after beginning of the trial participants were provided with a
137 white roll with butter. After 8 h, participants were provided with a standard low (poly)phenol
138 meal (a buttered white roll with ham and cheese and potato chips/crisps) after which they left
139 the laboratory and returned home to sleep at home. They were instructed to continue the low
140 (poly)phenol diet that evening and return to the laboratory the next morning to provide
141 overnight urine. During the feeding trials participants collected all urine excreted over the
142 following time periods: 0-5, 5-8, 8-10 and 10-24 h. Urine was collected into sealable flasks kept
143 on ice. The total volume of each urine fraction was recorded and 2 mL aliquots were stored at -
144 80°C prior to analysis.

145

146 **Analysis of orange juice and urine by HPLC-HR-MS detection**

147 Urine samples and (poly)phenols in OJ were analysed using the procedures described by
148 Pereira-Caro et al. (17). Briefly, aliquots of urine and OJ were analysed using a Dionex Ultimate
149 3000 RS UHPLC system comprising a UHPLC pump, a PDA detector scanning from 200 to 600

150 nm, and an autosampler operating at 4°C (Thermo Scientific, San Jose, CA). Reverse phase
151 separations were carried out using a 150 x 4.6 mm i.d. 5 µm 100Å C18 Kinetex column
152 (Phenomenex, Macclesfield, UK) maintained at 40°C and eluted at a flow rate of 1.0 mL/min with
153 a 45 min gradient of 3-50% of 0.1% acidic methanol in 0.1% aqueous formic acid. After passing
154 through the flow cell of the PDA detector the column eluate was split and 0.2 mL/min directed to
155 an Exactive™ Orbitrap mass spectrometer fitted with a heated electrospray ionization probe
156 (Thermo Scientific) operating in negative ionization mode. Analyses were based on scanning
157 from 100 to 1000 *m/z*, with in-source collision-induced dissociation at 25.0 eV. The capillary
158 temperature was 300°C, the heater temperature was 150°C, the sheath gas and the auxillary gas
159 flow rate were both 20 units, the sweep gas was 3 and the spray voltage was 3.00 kV. Data
160 acquisition and processing were carried out using Xcalibur 3.0 software.

161 Identification and quantification of OJ (poly)phenols and their urinary metabolites was
162 achieved as described previously (17). Analysis of flavanone metabolites and phenolic
163 catabolites in urine was carried out by selecting the theoretical exact mass of the molecular ion
164 by reference to 0.1-750 ng standard curves. A linear response was obtained for all the available
165 standards, as checked by linear regression analysis ($R^2 > 0.999$). Limits of detection (ranging from
166 0.02 to 0.09 ng), limits of quantification (0.08-0.5 ng) and precision of the assay (as the
167 coefficient of intra-assay variation, ranging from 1.8 to 4.9%) were considered acceptable
168 allowing the quantification of metabolites. All reference compounds used for calibration curves
169 were made up in synthetic urine. In absence of reference compounds, metabolites were
170 quantified by reference to the calibration curve of a closely related parent compound (17).

171

172 **Statistical analysis**

173 Data were assessed for normality of distribution using Shapiro-Wilk test and revealed that
174 data was not normally distributed. The comparisons of responses measured at different time
175 points were made by Friedman's ANOVA followed by Wilcoxon post-hoc signed-rank test.
176 Wilcoxon post-hoc signed-rank test was used to determine whether differences in total and
177 relative excretion of flavanone metabolites and phenolic catabolites were significant between the
178 trained and detrained states. Significance was accepted at the $P < 0.05$ level and data are
179 presented as mean values \pm SE unless stated otherwise. Statistical analyses were performed
180 using Statistica (version 10.0; StatSoft, Inc., Tulsa, OK) and Minitab (version 17.3.1; Minitab, Inc.,
181 State College, PA).

182 Standard deviations for mean concentration differences between trained and detrained
183 states were 0.6 μmol , 3.8 μmol and 4.7 μmol for total naringenin, total hesperetin and total
184 flavonones metabolites respectively. Thus, with 10 participants, a minimum detected differences
185 of 0.6 μmol for total naringenin, 2.6 μmol for total hesperetin, and 3.4 μmol for total flavonone
186 metabolites at specified power of 80% were significant at the 5% level.

187
188

189 **RESULTS**

190 **Participants**

191 Of 16 eligible participants, 3 individuals declined to take part in the study because of time
192 commitments, and thus 13 participants were enrolled (see Supplemental Figure 1 under
193 "Supplemental data" in the online issue). Of these 13 participants, one participant dropout before
194 beginning the study due to illness. Of the 12 participants who completed study, two were
195 excluded, as prior to the second feeding trial they did not follow low (poly)phenol diet. Thus, the
196 study was completed by 10 endurance-trained men with a height of 178 ± 1.9 cm, a BMI of $21.7 \pm$

197 0.6 kg/m², percentage body fat of 7.5 ± 0.9% and a $\dot{V}O_2$ max of 58.2 ± 1.7 mL/kg/min (mean
198 values ± SE). The volunteers had been training on a routine basis for the past 4-12 years and
199 typically performed 5-10 h of endurance training per week. They competed regularly in running
200 events, such as marathons and half-marathons, at regional and national levels.

201

202 **Identification and quantification of (poly)phenols in orange juice**

203 The 500 mL of OJ consumed by the volunteers in both trials contained hesperetin-7-*O*-
204 rutinoside (246 µmol), hesperetin-7-*O*-rutinoside-3'-*O*-glucoside (4 µmol), naringenin-7-*O*-
205 rutinoside (62 µmol), 4'-*O*-methyl-naringenin-7-*O*-rutinoside (14 µmol), eriodictyol-7-*O*-
206 rutinoside (4 µmol), apigenin-6,8-*C*-diglucoside (35 µmol), ferulic acid-4'-*O*-glucoside (16 µmol),
207 coumaric acid-4'-glucoside (11 µmol), a sinapic acid-*O*-hexoside (6 µmol) and the amine *p*-
208 sympatol (6 µmol) (**Table 1**). Thus, in total, the ingested juice contained 398 µmol of
209 (poly)phenols of which 330 µmol were flavanones. The structures of the identified OJ
210 component are presented in our earlier publication (17).

211

212 **Excretion of flavanone metabolites in urine**

213 As anticipated, no flavanone metabolites were detected in 0-24 h baseline urine collected
214 prior to the consumption of 500 mL of OJ. Quantitative data on the urinary excretion of
215 flavanone metabolites 0-5, 5-8, 8-10, 10-24 h after OJ intake by the 10 endurance-trained
216 volunteers in both trained and detrained conditions are summarised in **Figure 1**. Hesperetin
217 metabolites were excreted in urine in higher quantities than naringenin and eriodictyol
218 metabolites. The 0-24 h excretion of hesperetin metabolites, and as a consequence the overall
219 level of flavanones metabolites, was significantly higher after a 7-day break in training than the

220 quantities excreted during training. This was due to increased amounts of hesperetin
221 metabolites excreted 5-8 h after OJ intake ($6.1 \pm 3.0 \mu\text{mol}$ compared to $2.5 \pm 1.1 \mu\text{mol}$). There
222 were no statistically significant differences in excretion of naringenin and eriodictyol metabolites
223 by subjects who consumed OJ in the trained and detrained condition (Figure 1).

224 The basis of the HPLC-HR-MS-based identifications of 19 flavanone metabolites was outlined
225 in an earlier publication (17). The structures of the fully identified metabolites are illustrated in
226 **Figure 2**. Quantitative estimates of the levels of the individual metabolites excreted 0-5, 5-8, 8-
227 10, 10-24 and 0-24 h after OJ consumption by the trained and detrained volunteers are
228 presented in Supplemental Table 1 in the on-line Supplemental Information. The 0-24 h data are
229 summarised in **Table 2** which shows that urinary excretion of total flavanone metabolites was
230 significantly higher in volunteers who consumed OJ after the detraining period compared to the
231 trained trial ($13.8 \pm 8.2 \mu\text{mol}$ vs $17.2 \pm 4.8 \mu\text{mol}$). This was due to the significant increase in the
232 levels of the main metabolites hesperetin-3'-*O*-glucuronide, hesperetin-7-*O*-glucuronide,
233 hesperetin-3'-*O*-sulfate and a hesperetin-*O*-glucosyl-sulfate. There was no significant difference
234 in excretion, in the trained and detrained states, of the lower quantities of naringenin and
235 eriodictyol metabolites. The main naringenin metabolites were the 4'- and 7-*O*-glucuronides while
236 trace amounts of an eriodictyol-sulfate and an eriodictyol-*O*-glucuronyl-sulfate were also
237 excreted (Table 2).

238 The overall 0-24 h excretion in the trained and detrained states expressed as a percentage
239 of intake was, respectively, 3.8% and 4.8% for hesperetin metabolites, 5.4% and 6.2% for
240 naringenin metabolites and 5.0% and 5.0% for metabolites of eriodictyol metabolites (Table 2).
241 Overall flavanones metabolite excretion was, respectively, 4.2% and 5.2% of intake for the
242 trained and detrained stages of the study. These values are significantly different (Table 2).

243

244 **Urinary excretion of phenolic and aromatic catabolites**

245 Previously, 65 phenolic and aromatic catabolites were identified in urine after OJ
246 consumption by the trained and detrained volunteers (17). Supplemental Table 2 contains
247 estimates of the 33 phenolic compounds present in quantifiable amounts that were excreted in
248 urine 0-5 h, 5-8 h, 8-10 h and 10-24 h following OJ intake by the two groups of volunteers. For
249 the structures of these compounds see Supplemental Figure 2.

250 The various phenolics are not necessarily exclusively the products of colonic microbiota-
251 mediated degradation of the OJ (poly)phenols which reached the distal gastrointestinal tract
252 (GIT). A portion of the catabolites in Supplemental Table 2 are also products of endogenous
253 pathways unrelated to OJ intake (28). Hence, they were present to varying degrees in the 12 h
254 overnight urine collected prior to OJ intake after volunteers had been on a low (poly)phenol diet
255 low for 36-48 h. These 0-12 h baseline values were, therefore, used on a per hour basis to
256 subtract from the total amounts of phenolic and aromatic catabolites excreted in urine 0-24 h
257 post-supplementation in order to assess the impact of OJ consumption. The data are presented in
258 **Table 3**. A total of $202 \pm 54 \mu\text{mol}$ were excreted over the 24 h period by the trained group, which
259 corresponds to 51% of the $398 \mu\text{mol}$ (poly)phenol intake, while overall phenolic catabolite
260 excretion in the detrained condition increased, but not significantly, to $236 \pm 74 \mu\text{mol}$, which is a
261 59% recovery.

262 Excretion of some of the 33 individual phenolic compounds did increase significantly after
263 OJ intake by both groups (Table 3). Three of these catabolites, namely 3-(3'-hydroxy-4'-
264 methoxyphenyl)hydracrylic acid, a methoxyphenylacetic acid-*O*-glucuronide and 3'-
265 hydroxyphenylacetic acid, were excreted in amounts after cessation of training that were

266 significantly higher than excretion prior to stopping training. These increases were relatively
267 minor compared to the overall excretion of phenolic catabolites. However, the increased
268 excretion of 3-(3'-hydroxy-4'-methoxyphenyl)hydracrylic acid, by both groups after OJ intake, is
269 of interest as it has been proposed as a biomarker of hesperetin intake (14, 18).

270

271 **Volunteer variations in excretion of flavanones metabolites and phenolic catabolites**

272 **Table 4** summarises data obtained with the individual volunteers on the total 0-24 h urinary
273 recovery of metabolites from a 330 μmol intake of flavanones and the phenolic catabolite
274 recovery from the ingested 398 μmol of (poly)phenolics. Detraining significantly increased mean
275 flavanone metabolite excretion from 13.8 μmol to 17.2 μmol , with 9 of the 10 subjects showing
276 increased excretion with detraining. Detraining increased mean phenolic catabolite excretion
277 from 202 μmol to 236 μmol but this increase was not statistically significant although 8 of the
278 individual volunteers did show an increase (Table 4).

279 There was noticeable variation between the volunteers which is reflected in the range of
280 the amounts of metabolites and catabolites shown in Table 4. For instance, in the trained
281 condition volunteers 1, 2 and 3 excreted 4.8-4.9 μmol of flavanones metabolites while volunteer
282 9 excreted 34 μmol and subject 10, 42 μmol . There was, however, a consistency in that low
283 excreters in the trained condition were also low excreters when they stopped training for 7 days
284 and likewise with the high excreters. For instance, volunteer 1, 2 and 3 excreted 4.8-4.9 μmol of
285 flavanone metabolites when training and 6.7-7.5 μmol after stopping training. Subject 10
286 excreted 42 μmol of metabolites in the trained condition and 50 μmol after stopping training
287 (Table 4). The trend was less evident with the higher level excretion of the phenolic catabolites.
288 Four of 5 subjects who excreted >200 μmol of catabolites also excreted >200 μmol after stopping

289 training for 7 days (volunteers 1, 2, 5 and 6), the exception being volunteers 7. The one volunteer
290 who excreted <200 μmol of catabolites while training also did so after cessation of training
291 (volunteer 10) (Table 4).

292

293 **DISCUSSION**

294 In this study with endurance trained athletes flavanone bioavailability was assessed on the
295 basis of urinary excretion after OJ intake. Although plasma profiles can supply useful
296 information, unlike cumulative urinary excretion, they are not an accurate quantitative guide of
297 absorption because the presence of metabolites and catabolites in the circulatory system is
298 transient as they are rapidly removed from the bloodstream via renal excretion (18, 28, 29).

299 Our previous OJ feeding study showed that excretion of hesperetin and naringenin
300 metabolites 0-24 h after OJ consumption corresponded to 16% intake, while excretion of
301 phenolic catabolites was equivalent to ~88% of (poly)phenol intake (18). In the current
302 investigation, with a very different population of endurance trained male athletes, the ingestion
303 of OJ during training resulted in a lower level of excretion with 4.2% recovery of flavanone
304 metabolites in urine collected 0-24 h after intake (Table 2). Excretion of phenolic catabolites
305 during training was also reduced, but not to the same degree, with 51% of (poly)phenol intake
306 appearing in urine (Tables 3 and 4). Bioavailability was increased significantly, but none-the-
307 less marginally, when the athletes stopped training for 7 days at which point OJ consumption
308 resulted in a 5.2% excretion of flavanone phase II metabolites (Table 2). The overall excretion of
309 phenolic catabolites was substantially higher than that of the flavanone metabolites, and
310 increased from 51% to 59% of intake after cessation of training, but the increase is not
311 statistically different (Table 4).

312 The data in Table 2 indicates that hesperetin-3'-*O*-glucuronide, the urinary main flavanone
313 metabolite, is a good biomarker of hesperetin and OJ intake while the information in Table 3
314 confirms the earlier suggestion (14, 18) that 3-(3'-hydroxy-4'-methoxyphenyl)hydracrylic acid,
315 because of its 3'-hydroxy-4'-methoxy structure, is also a key indicator of hesperetin
316 consumption. Many other phenolic compounds were also excreted in increased quantities after
317 OJ consumption, most notably 4'-hydroxyphenylacetic acid (Table 3). However, most, if not all,
318 are colonic catabolites of other dietary (poly)phenols having been detected in feeding studies
319 with a number of products or following in vitro fecal incubations (30–41) and, thus, are not
320 specific indicators of flavanone intake.

321 The markedly lower levels of flavanone metabolite excretion by the endurance trained
322 volunteers compared to our previous study with less active subjects (4.2% vs 16% of intake)
323 could be due to a more rapid rate of gastrointestinal transport in the athletic subjects (20).
324 Detailed analysis of plasma pharmacokinetic profiles of (poly)phenol metabolites and catabolites
325 obtained with the current study will be the topic of a separate publication. However, the profiles
326 for hesperetin-7-*O*-glucuronide and ferulic acid-4'-sulfate shown in Figure 3 in the
327 Supplementary Information indicate that cessation of training for 7 days had no discernible
328 impact on gastrointestinal transport of flavanones, unlike co-ingestion of OJ with yogurt
329 demonstrated in an earlier study (42).

330 Endurance training has been reported to bring about changes in the colonic microbiota
331 (43) which, arguably, could limit microbiota-mediated cleavage of the rutinoside moiety of
332 flavanone glycosides and so reduce the amount of the hesperetin and naringenin released for
333 absorption in the distal GIT. In addition, training results in adverse physiologic adaptations in
334 the gut (44) and enhances muscle blood flow up to 12-16 h after the last exercise session (21).

335 These events could inhibit gut function and further reduce the absorption of the flavanone
336 aglycones. While stopping training for 7 days significantly increased flavanone metabolite
337 excretion from 4.2% to 5.2% of intake (Table 2) a longer period without training would appear
338 to be required to attain the 16% excretion of flavanones metabolites observed when OJ was
339 consumed by volunteers who were not endurance athletes (18).

340 The main flavanone metabolites, hesperetin-3'-*O*-glucuronide, hesperetin-7-*O*-glucuronide,
341 hesperetin-3'-sulfate (Table 2), are absorbed principally in the colon after microbiota-mediated
342 cleavage of the rutinose moiety of hesperetin-7-*O*-rutinoside (13, 45). These metabolites, at
343 concentrations that can be achieved in vivo, have been reported to exert anti-atherogenic effects,
344 via ameliorating monocyte adhesion to endothelial cells and modulating the expression of
345 proteins associated with inflammation and suppressing induced inflammation (46, 47). They also
346 efficiently reduce the TNF- α -induced migration of human aortic endothelial cells. This was
347 accompanied and mediated by significant decreases in PAI-1 levels, a thrombogenic protein,
348 which is involved in a wide range of cardiovascular diseases, as well as in the cell migration (48).
349 The importance of the colonic microbiota is further emphasized by the fact that a number of the
350 colon-derived phenolic catabolites which increased significantly after OJ intake (Table 3) also
351 exert potential protective effects in ex vivo and in vitro test systems at physiological doses (49-
352 52).

353 There are substantial inter-individual differences with, for instance, excretion of flavanones
354 metabolites after cessation of training ranging from 6.2 μ mol to 50 μ mol (Table 4). Intra-
355 individual differences, however, were much smaller with high excretors producing relatively
356 high amounts of metabolites in both the trained state and after cessation of training (volunteers
357 9 and 10) while low excretors maintained this condition after stopping training (volunteers 1-3).
358 The inter-individual variation in the absorption of OJ flavanones (53, 54), and in the

359 bioavailability of dietary (poly)phenols in general, is an area of increasing interest because
360 information of variations in the capacity to metabolize these compounds may lead to a better
361 understanding of the beneficial effects of plant bioactive compounds against diseases,
362 particularly, their role in healthy ageing and cardiometabolic risk reduction (55).

363 The results of the current study contradict the findings of Medina et al. (19) who reported
364 that after consumption of an Aronia-citrus juice, the quantity of flavanone metabolites excreted
365 in urine by triathletes was 5-fold higher than excretion by control, more sedentary volunteers.
366 The two groups of volunteers consumed a juice containing 80 mg of flavanones which, assuming
367 they were mainly hesperetin- and naringenin-*O*-rutinosides, equates with a dose of ~130 μ mol.
368 The aglycones hesperetin and naringenin, released by enzyme hydrolysis of urine prior to
369 analysis, were quantified by HPLC-MS. The 0-24 h post-consumption excretion was estimated to
370 be ~0.3% of intake by the control group and ~1.3% by the triathletes. The excretion by the
371 control group is very low compared with 16% obtained in our more recent acute feeding study
372 with OJ (18). Although hydrolysis of flavonoid glucuronide and sulfate metabolites by mollusc
373 enzymes, which have inconsistent titre, does not result in complete cleavage, especially of
374 sulfates, and as a consequence under-estimates metabolite levels (56, 57), the efficiency of this
375 step is unlikely to have been so low as to account for estimates of urinary excretion being ~50-
376 fold lower than those detected by Pereira-Caro et al. (18, 58) and also markedly lower than
377 flavanone excretion reported by other investigators (40, 53, 54, 59, 60).

378

379 **CONCLUSIONS**

380 Short duration cessation of physical training slightly, but significantly, enhanced the
381 bioavailability of OJ polyphenols due to increased excretion of hesperetin metabolites. When

382 compared with data obtained in previous OJ feeding studies (18) the bioavailability of OJ
383 flavanones in endurance trained male athletes was lower than in less active individuals. The
384 more substantial excretion of colon-derived phenolic catabolites after OJ intake was not
385 statistically different in the trained and detrained states but was lower than observed in the
386 previous study with volunteers who were not involved in a training programme. To what extent
387 long-term participation in endurance training and reduced flavanone bioavailability, and
388 potentially lowered bioavailability of other dietary (poly)phenolics, impacts on health and ageing
389 remains to be determined. Hesperetin-3'-*O*-glucuronide and 3-(3'-hydroxy-4'-
390 methoxyphenyl)hydracrylic acid are urinary biomarkers of the consumption of hesperetin-
391 containing OJ and other citrus products.

392

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398 metabolites.

399 **Authors contributions**

400 D.M. contributed to the design of the study, supervised the assessments of
401 cardiorespiratory fitness the volunteers and the feeding study, conducted statistical analyses and
402 drafted the manuscript and its revisions; A.L.G. contributed to the design of the study and the
403 statistical analyses and the preparation of the manuscript; T.P and A.M.-N. carried out the
404 assessment of fitness of the volunteers and the feeding study; G.P.-C. and I.A.L conducted the

405 HPLC-HR-MS analyses, contributed to the statistical analysis and drafting of the manuscript and
406 its revisions; J.M.M.R contributed to the analytical aspects of the study and the drafting of the
407 manuscript; A.C. assisted in the design the study, supported the HPLC-HR-MS analyses and
408 drafted the manuscript and its revisions.

409 **Conflict of interests**

410 AC is a consultant for Mars, Inc. and has received unrestricted research grants from Mars
411 and research grants from other food companies and government agencies with an interest in
412 health and nutrition. The other authors declare no conflict of interest.

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TABLE 1Quantities of (poly)phenols in 500 mL of orange juice¹

Orange Juice (Poly)phenols	µmol in 500 mL
Hesperetin-7- <i>O</i> -rutinoside	246
Hesperetin-7- <i>O</i> -rutinoside-3'- <i>O</i> -glucoside	4
Naringenin-7- <i>O</i> -rutinoside	62
4'- <i>O</i> -methyl-naringenin-7- <i>O</i> -rutinoside	14
Eriodictyol-7- <i>O</i> -rutinoside	4
<i>Total flavanones</i>	330
Apigenin-6,8- <i>C</i> -diglucoside	35
<i>Total flavonoids</i>	35
Ferulic acid-4'- <i>O</i> -glucoside	16
Coumaric acid-4'-glucoside	11
Sinapic acid- <i>O</i> -hexoside	6
<i>Total phenolic acids</i>	33
<i>p</i> -Sympatol	6
<i>Total amines</i>	6
Total (Poly)phenols	398

¹ Data expressed as µmol, SEM <5% of the mean in all instances (n = 3).

TABLE 2

Urinary excretion of flavanone metabolites 0-24 h after the ingestion of 500 mL of orange juice in trained and detrained states ¹⁻³

	Trained	Detrained
Naringenin metabolites		
Naringenin-4',7- <i>O</i> -diglucuronide	0.02 ± 0.01	0.02 ± 0.01
Naringenin-5,7- <i>O</i> -diglucuronide	0.10 ± 0.09	0.03 ± 0.02
Naringenin-4',5- <i>O</i> -diglucuronide	0.09 ± 0.06	0.04 ± 0.03
Naringenin- <i>O</i> -glucuronyl-sulfate	0.02 ± 0.01	0.02 ± 0.01
Naringenin-4'- <i>O</i> -glucuronide	1.8 ± 1.0	2.1 ± 1.1
Naringenin-7- <i>O</i> -glucuronide	2.0 ± 1.0	2.3 ± 1.1
Naringenin-4'-sulfate	0.1 ± 0.1	0.2 ± 0.1
Total naringenin metabolites	4.1 ± 2.2 (5.4%)	4.7 ± 2.4 (6.2%)
Hesperetin metabolites		
Hesperetin-3',7- <i>O</i> -diglucuronide	0.02 ± 0.02	0.02 ± 0.02
Hesperetin-5,7- <i>O</i> -diglucuronide	0.3 ± 0.3	0.3 ± 0.3
Hesperetin-3',5- <i>O</i> -diglucuronide	0.3 ± 0.2	0.3 ± 0.2
Hesperetin-5- <i>O</i> -glucuronide	0.06 ± 0.03	0.06 ± 0.03
Hesperetin-7- <i>O</i> -glucuronide	0.8 ± 0.6	1.0 ± 0.6 ³
Hesperetin-3'- <i>O</i> -glucuronide	6.0 ± 3.6	7.6 ± 4.4 ³
Hesperetin-sulfate	0.2 ± 0.1	0.2 ± 0.2
Hesperetin-3'- <i>O</i> -sulfate	1.7 ± 1.0	2.4 ± 1.3 ³
Hesperetin- <i>O</i> -glucosyl-sulfate	0.08 ± 0.04	0.11 ± 0.06 ³
Total hesperetin metabolites	9.4 ± 5.8 (3.8%)	12.0 ± 7.0 (4.8 %) ³
Eriodictyol metabolites		
Eriodictyol-sulfate	0.1 ± 0.1	0.1 ± 0.1
Eriodictyol- <i>O</i> -glucuronyl-sulfate	0.1 ± 0.1	0.08 ± 0.09
Total eriodictyol metabolites	0.2 ± 0.2 (5.0%)	0.2 ± 0.2 (5.0%)
Total flavanone metabolites	13.8 ± 4.2 (4.2%)	17.2 ± 4.8 (4.8%) ³

¹ The orange juice contained 330 µmol of flavanones (76 µmol naringenin-*O*-glycosides, 250 µmol hesperetin-*O*-glycosides, 4 µmol eriodictyol-7-*O*-rutoside).

² Data are presented in µmol as mean values ± SE (n=10) and in bold italics as a percentage of intake.

³ Significant increase in the excretion by the detrained volunteers ($P < 0.05$, Wilcoxon signed rank test).

TABLE 3

Quantities of the main phenolic and aromatic compounds excreted in urine collected for 12 h prior to supplementation (baseline) or 0-24 h after the ingestion of 500 mL of orange juice in trained and detrained states.¹⁻⁵

Phenolic catabolites	Trained		Detrained	
	Baseline ⁵	Post-OJ intake	Baseline ⁵	Post-OJ intake
Cinnamic acids				
Coumaric acid-4'-O-sulfate	0.02 ± 0.02	0.1 ± 0.0	0.05 ± 0.05	0.15 ± 0.10
Caffeic acid-3'-sulfate	0.2 ± 0.1	< LOQ	0.2 ± 0.1	0.02 ± 0.01
Ferulic acid	0.03 ± 0.02	0.06 ± 0.02	0.02 ± 0.01	0.1 ± 0.1
Ferulic acid-4'-O-glucuronide	0.2 ± 0.05	0.7 ± 0.2	0.02 ± 0.01	1.1 ± 0.2 ³
Ferulic acid-4'-sulfate	2.2 ± 0.8	7.8 ± 2.5 ³	2.0 ± 1.0	5.9 ± 2.1 ³
Isoferulic acid-3'-O-glucuronide	0.06 ± 0.03	1.6 ± 0.5 ³	0.07 ± 0.05	1.3 ± 0.4 ³
Total cinnamic acids	2.7 ± 1.1	10.3 ± 3.3³	2.3 ± 1.7	8.6 ± 2.9³
Phenylhydracrylic acids				
3-(3'-Hydroxyphenyl)hydracrylic acid	1.3 ± 0.8	0.2 ± 0.3	1.3 ± 1.0	0.6 ± 0.2
3-(3'-Hydroxy-4'-methoxyphenyl)hydracrylic acid	0.3 ± 0.2	18.5 ± 5.8 ³	0.2 ± 0.2	21 ± 6 ^{3,4}
Total phenylhydracrylic acids	1.6 ± 1.0	18.7 ± 6.1³	1.5 ± 1.2	21.6 ± 6.2³
Phenylpropionic acids				
3-(4'-Hydroxyphenyl)propionic acid-3'-O-sulfate	1 ± 1	0.5 ± 0.2	1 ± 1	0.9 ± 0.4
3-(3'-Methoxy-4'-hydroxyphenyl)propionic acid	0.3 ± 0.3	0.6 ± 0.2	0.10 ± 0.06	1.0 ± 0.3 ³
3-(3'-Methoxyphenyl)propionic acid-4'-O-glucuronide	0.6 ± 0.4	1.3 ± 0.4	0.5 ± 0.2	1.0 ± 0.4
3-(4'-Methoxyphenyl)propionic acid-3'-O-glucuronide	0.06 ± 0.05	6.3 ± 2.0 ³	0.06 ± 0.04	5.7 ± 1.8 ³
3-(3'-Methoxyphenyl)propionic acid-4'-O-sulfate	1.2 ± 0.7	2.6 ± 0.8	0.4 ± 0.2	2.5 ± 0.8 ³
3-(4'-Methoxyphenyl)propionic acid-3'-O-sulfate	0.06 ± 0.05	3.2 ± 1.0 ³	0.05 ± 0.04	3.3 ± 1.0 ³
3-(Phenyl)propionic acid	0.2 ± 0.2	0.9 ± 0.3 ³	0.5 ± 0.7	0.7 ± 0.2
Total phenylpropionic acids	5.5 ± 3.7	15.4 ± 4.9³	4.4 ± 3.5	15.1 ± 4.9³
Phenylacetic acids				
3',4'-Dihydroxyphenylacetic acid	0.2 ± 0.1	1.1 ± 0.4 ³	0.4 ± 0.4	0.7 ± 0.3
Hydroxyphenylacetic acid-3'-sulfate	1.2 ± 0.5	< LOQ	0.7 ± 0.4	< LOQ
3'-Methoxy-4-hydroxyphenylacetic acid	0.8 ± 0.2	0.7 ± 0.2	0.6 ± 0.2	1.1 ± 0.1

Methoxyphenylacetic acid- <i>O</i> -glucuronide	0.8 ± 0.5	0.05 ± 0.01	0.3 ± 0.1	0.7 ± 0.3 ^{3,4}
3'-Methoxyphenylacetic acid-4'-sulfate	1.2 ± 0.7	< LOQ	0.8 ± 0.5	0.2 ± 0.2
4'-Methoxyphenylacetic acid-3'-sulfate	0.9 ± 0.3	0.6 ± 0.2	0.7 ± 0.4	0.7 ± 0.3
3'-Hydroxyphenylacetic acid	0.3 ± 0.1	< LOQ	0.3 ± 0.3	1.7 ± 0.6 ^{3,4}
4'-Hydroxyphenylacetic acid	6 ± 2	104 ± 24 ³	3 ± 1	122 ± 38 ³
Phenylacetic acid	0.7 ± 0.4	0.8 ± 0.2	0.4 ± 0.2	1.5 ± 0.4 ³
Total phenylacetic acids	11.8 ± 4.7	107.2 ± 24³	7.4 ± 3.8	128.6 ± 40^{3,4}
Benzoic acids				
3-Hydroxybenzoic acid-4-sulfate	0.6 ± 0.3	4.8 ± 0.1 ³	0.4 ± 0.2	6.9 ± 0.1 ³
4-Hydroxybenzoic acid	0.3 ± 0.2	0.1 ± 0.1	0.2 ± 0.1	0.3 ± 0.1
Benzoic acid-4-sulfate	2 ± 1	< LOQ	1.6 ± 0.6	< LOQ
Total benzoic acids	3.0 ± 1.5	4.9 ± 0.2	2.3 ± 1.0	7.2 ± 0.1³
Mandelic acids				
3'-Methoxy-4'-hydroxymandelic acid	0.7 ± 0.2	0.35 ± 0.1	0.4 ± 0.1	0.9 ± 0.1
4'-Hydroxymandelic acid	0.6 ± 0.2	1.8 ± 0.6 ³	0.30 ± 0.07	2.4 ± 0.1 ³
Total mandelic acids	1.8 ± 0.4	2.15 ± 0.7³	0.7 ± 0.2	3.3 ± 0.2³
Benzene triols				
1,3,5-Trihydroxyphenol	20.0 ± 3.4	10.9 ± 4.8	14.5 ± 5.2	9.3 ± 4.9
Total benzene triols	20.0 ± 3.4	10.9 ± 4.8	14.5 ± 5.2	9.3 ± 4.9
Hippuric acids				
4'-Hydroxyhippuric acid	1.3 ± 0.4	4.5 ± 1.3 ³	1.0 ± 0.6	5.7 ± 1.8 ³
3'-Hydroxyhippuric acid	1.5 ± 1.0	0.9 ± 0.5	1.5 ± 1.2	1.5 ± 0.6
Hippuric acid	24.0 ± 6.0	26.7 ± 8.6	18 ± 5	35.1 ± 11.0 ³
Total hippuric acids	26.8 ± 7.4	32.1 ± 10.4	20.4 ± 6.8	42.3 ± 13.6³
Total phenolic catabolites	71.7 ± 22.4	202 ± 54³ (51%)	52.4 ± 22.0	236 ± 74³ (59%)

¹ Data are expressed in µmol as mean values ± SE (n=10). The orange juice contained 398 µmol of (poly)phenols.

² Italicised numbers in parentheses represent excretion of phenolic catabolites as a percentage of (poly)phenol intake.

³ Statistically significant higher excretion above baseline after orange juice consumption ($P < 0.05$, Wilcoxon signed-rank test) in trained or detrained states.

⁴ Significantly higher excretion of phenolic acid catabolites after orange juice intake following cessation of training for 7 days compared to consumption while training ($p < 0.05$, Wilcoxon signed-rank test)

⁵ Phenolic content of baseline urine collected for 12 h prior to orange juice intake used, on an excretion per hour basis, to subtract from excretion values of trained and detrained states obtained 0-24 h after supplementation to estimate increases in the phenolic content attributable to orange juice intake.

<LOQ – value below the limit of quantification.

TABLE 4

Summary of the quantities of total flavanone metabolites and phenolic colonic catabolites excreted in urine 0-24 h after the consumption of 500 mL of orange juice by 10 endurance trained athletes in and 7-day detrained states. ¹⁻⁴

		Volunteers											
Volunteers	Metabolites/catabolites	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Mean ± SE	Range
Trained	Flavanone metabolites	4.8	4.9	4.9	6.9	7.8	8.2	11	13	34	42	13.8 ± 4.2	4.8 – 42
	Phenolic catabolites	221	333	171	154	242	258	250	160	150	77	202 ± 54	77 – 333
	Total relative to intake (%)	57	85	44	40	63	67	65	43	46	30	54 ± 17	30 – 85
Detrained	Flavanones metabolites	6.9↑	6.7↑	7.5↑	8.8↑	14↑	17↑	6.2	15↑	39↑	50↑	17.2 ± 4.8 ³	6.2 – 50
	Phenolic catabolites	291↑	388↑	138	247↑	367↑	261	124	231↑	189↑	124↑	236 ± 74	124 – 388
	Total relative to intake (%)	75	99	36	64	96	70	33	62	57	44	64 ± 20	33 – 96

¹ The juice contained 398 μmol of (poly)phenols including 330 μmol of flavanone. Values for phenolic catabolites background subtracted.

² Data expressed in μmol and in bold as a percentage of intake.

³ Significant increase in the excretion of mean total metabolites (n = 10) following cessation of training for 7 days compared to the trained state ($P < 0.05$, Wilcoxon signed-rank test)

⁴ ↑ indicates an increase with individual subjects following 7 days cessation of training

Figure Legends

Figure 1. Excretion of flavanone metabolites 0-5 h, 5-8 h, 8-10 h , 10-24 h and 0-24 h after the ingestion of orange juice containing 330 μmol of flavanones (76 μmol naringenin-O-glycosides, 250 μmol hesperetin-O-glycosides, 4 μmol eriodictyol-7-O-rutinoside) by endurance-trained volunteers while training (trained-black bars) and after stopping training for 7 days (detrained-grey bars). Data expressed in μmol as mean values \pm standard error (n=10). *Significant increase in the excretion by the detrained volunteers ($P < 0.05$, Wilcoxon post-hoc test after Friedman's ANOVA).

Figure 2. Structures of selected flavanone phase II metabolites and 3-(3'-hydroxy-4'-methoxyphenyl)hydracrylic acid detected in urine after the ingestion of orange juice.