

PHYTOSTEROLS – OCCURRENCE AND IMPORTANCE FOR MAN

Summary

Phytosterols (plant sterols) are compounds widely distributed among the plant kingdom occurring in the highest amounts in plant oils. They can be classified into two groups: sterols and stanols, which have fully saturated sterol rings. The main interest in phytosterols is due to their cholesterol-lowering effect

in human plasma which is important for their application in different food products as natural drugs protecting against arteriosclerosis and heart diseases. Moreover, it has been shown that phytosterols show also anticancer action against colon, breast and prostate cancer and have antioxidation properties.