

ARONIA-PASCOE® Aronia extract reduces cardiovascular risk factors in patients after myocardial infarction

Oxidative stress is an important element in the development of atherosclerosis which causes increased blood pressure and increases risk of cardiovascular disease such as cardiac infarction and stroke. Excessive production of free radicals and a parallel drop in antioxidant capacity defines oxidative stress and involves oxidation of blood lipids as well as direct inhibition of the processes in the blood vessel wall that regulate blood pressure. Oxidised blood lipids (LDL) are considered to promote atherosclerosis by activating inflammatory cells (monocytes) which then take up fat molecules and become attached to the blood vessel walls. In this way the process of atherosclerosis begins and plaques form on the blood vessel wall and there is narrowing of the blood vessels. Chronic treatment with dietary antioxidative flavonoids has been shown to counteract the process of atherosclerosis – they reduce low-density lipoprotein oxidation, have anti-inflammatory effects, support vascular function and decrease systolic blood pressure.

ARONIA-PASCOE® is an anthocyanin-rich extract of *Aronia melanocarpa* berries which is used as a supplement to support the antioxidant mechanisms of the body. In a placebo-controlled randomised clinical trial, ARONIA-PASCOE® Aronia extract showed impressive effects in significantly reducing the levels of cardiovascular risk markers in patients with cardiovascular disease. Although several epidemiological and pharmacological studies have already indicated that anthocyanin intake improves cardiovascular health, this is the first such study in patients after myocardial infarction. The patients in the treatment group received 255 mg encapsulated ARONIA-PASCOE® Aronia extract daily for 6 weeks while the patients in the control group received a placebo (maltodextrin) in similar capsules. A highly significant drop in systolic and diastolic blood pressure was seen in the treatment group compared to the control group. A decrease of 132.2/86.3 mm Hg to 121.2/79.1 mm Hg was observed.

ARONIA-PASCOE® Aronia extract also had a beneficial effect on the level of oxidative stress measured as plasma concentrations of 8-isoprostane and oxidized low density lipoprotein (LDL). Both markers were lowered by 38 and 29 %, respectively, indicating that