OBJECTIVE: To examine the association between genistein intake (estimated from a food frequency questionnaire [FFQ]) and incidence of preeclampsia.

STUDY DESIGN: The study was conducted at University Malaya Medical Center, Kuala Lumpur, and involved 32 women with preeclampsia and 32 healthy pregnant women (matched by parity and gestational age). A validated FFQ was used to collect information regarding dietary intake of genistein during their pregnancy. The association between preeclampsia and the level of genistein intake was evaluated by categorizing the participants into 3 groups according to tertiles of estimated genistein intake.

RESULTS: The odds ratio estimates showed a four-fold increase in the risk of developing preeclampsia for tertile 1 (lowest intake) as compared with tertile 3 (highest intake) (crude OR, 4.38; 95% CI 1.21-15.81).

CONCLUSION: Lower levels of genistein intake were associated with an increased risk of developing preeclampsia. These findings suggest a possible beneficial role of genistein in the prevention of preeclampsia.

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