Abstract

Antioxidants are the major single responsible factor for the beneficial effects of fruits and vegetables. Even though studies on dietary antioxidant continue to be carried out around the world as active research area, very few studies have been done in Sri Lanka. Aim of this study was to estimate daily dietary intake and sources of antioxidant nutrients by undergraduates. This cross sectional study was conducted in Wayamba University, Makandura Premises. Dietary intakes of 98 subjects were assessed using non- consecutive 3 days of 24-hour dietary recalls. Antioxidant nutrients were analyzed using FoodBase2000 Nutritional software. The estimated daily intake of antioxidants were vitamin A: 388.1 ± 224.4μg, vitamin C: 44.78 ± 53.31mg, vitamin E: 1.517 ± 0.923mg, zinc: 5.884 ± 1.754 mg selenium: 17.21 ± 18.02 μg and copper 0.952 ± 0.698 mg among male and vitamin A: 307.9 ± 163.3μg, vitamin C: 34.50 ± 48.61mg, vitamin E: 1.714 ± 3.356mg, zinc: 5.248 ± 1.6 mg selenium: 18.68 ± 22.53 μg and copper 0.976 ± 0.603 mg among female. The identified major food sources were for vitamin A: hen's egg, vitamin C: potatoes, vitamin E: fish, zinc and selenium: egg and copper: sprats. On average, daily consumption was 2-3 servings of vegetables and one of fruits. Based on the recommendation, almost all the intake of antioxidant nutrients except copper appears inadequate. To ensure the inadequacy, there should be further studies specially biochemical analysis.

Key words: Antioxidants, RDA, Dietary intake