

New Product EQUELLE: Enhancing Women's Quality of Life and Health



A new Office for National Statistics (ONS) study has indicated that Japanese women have the longest life expectancy among women in 21 selected countries – an average of 86.4 years.^{*1}

In an aging society with an increasing average lifespan, data from the Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare indicate that the gap between healthy life expectancy and average life expectancy is 9.2 years for men and 12.8 years for women. This means that women are spending around one-seventh of their actual life either bedridden or in care. Because the extension of healthy

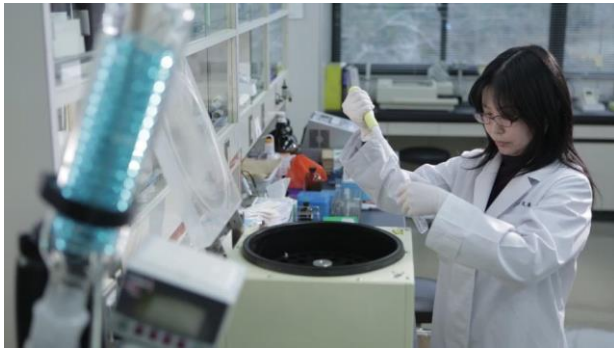
life expectancy and better quality of life for women is becoming more important, the Japanese government has made women's health one of the pillars of the government's "New Health Frontier Strategy".

Research into equol began in 1996 at the Saga Nutraceuticals Research Institute

For many years of soy research, Otsuka Pharmaceutical has focused on the relationship between equol and psychological and physical changes in menopausal women. In 2002 the *Lactococcus* 20-92, which produces equol, was successfully isolated. Both the Pharmaceuticals Business Division and the Nutraceuticals^{*2} Business Division have conducted a range of research in both Japan and the U.S. into the safety and efficacy of equol produced using this lactic acid bacterium to ferment soy germ (natural S-equol).



Saga Nutraceuticals Research Institute, Otsuka's Research Center for Nutraceuticals



Researcher working

After 18 years of research Otsuka launches EQUELLE, a food product containing equol for women during and after menopause

EQUELLE is a processed food made with lactic acid bacteria from fermented soy germ containing equol. Equol, produced from a soy isoflavone, especially daidzein, in the intestine is known to act like an estrogen. But only around 50% of Japanese women and 30% of European and American women have the capacity to produce it. It is important to all women to continuously take equol to maintain and improve health.

A joint US-Japan equol research collaboration with the Pharmaceutical Business Division of Otsuka Pharmaceutical proves that we are the field leader in the research of safety and efficacy of equol. This study contributes to women's health who are 40 and over during and after menopause. The company has also isolated the lactic acid bacterium that produces equol and developed technology to produce equol by fermenting soy germ.



Click to watch how Otsuka researchers worked for nearly two decades to create a unique product to enhance the quality of life for aging women



Caring for their health during this stage of life will enhance the quality of life and life expectancy

Rapid falls in estrogen levels among women from their forties onwards causes a range of physical and psychological changes, and accurate knowledge and information about these changes is desirable for proper management. In addition, proper care during this stage of life has significant implications for the lives of women as they age, and is important for

extending healthy life expectancy.

However, women sometimes suffer alone, unable to obtain information on what they need to do, and when. Staff with expert knowledge will be located throughout Japan to explain to women 40 and over about the importance of healthcare and the role of equol at their health stage.

Otsuka Pharmaceutical Co. Ltd. launched EQUELLE at pharmacies, hospitals and clinics across Japan and the product will also be available via the Otsuka Plus One e-commerce website.

*1 Office for National Statistics "International Compendium: Population Theme"

*2 Nutraceuticals : nutrition + pharmaceuticals

Products developed based on scientific evidence that contribute to the maintenance and promotion of everyday health.