

Table 2: Results from the observation of rat tongue samples with electron microscopy. The table presents the number of animals that belong to each category of degeneration, also divided according to age group and L-carnitine administration or not.

Grade of degeneration*	L-carnitine administration groups			Control groups		
Age group (months old)	5-months	12-months	18-months	5-months	12-months	18-months
Normal appearance [#]	4					
Moderate degeneration [^]		4	3	1		
Profound degeneration ^a			1		1	1

* Epithelial cell degeneration assessment with electron microscopy according to our proposed six-point system, [#] Normal appearance: 0 points or 1 point, [^] moderate degeneration: 2 points, ^a profound degeneration: >2 points.