



Wild Blueberries May Reduce Risk of Chronic Degenerative Diseases

A recent study set out to determine whether the consumption of wild blueberries would enhance the serum antioxidant status in healthy human subjects. A group of eight middle-aged male subjects participated in this single-blinded crossover study. When the study was finished, researchers had acquired enough data to demonstrate that supplementation of a freeze-dried blueberry powder increased serum antioxidant status in humans following a high-fat meal. An increased serum antioxidant status has been suggested as a possible variable in reducing the risk of many chronic degenerative disorders. More research is needed to confirm these findings. For more information go to the *British Journal of Nutrition*, 2002, Volume 88, pages 389-397.

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Pomegranate Juice May Slow Growth of Prostate Cancer

Men diagnosed with prostate cancer and who have begun treatment for it may find that drinking pomegranate juice daily could slow the growth of the cancer, and potentially stave off further (more drastic) therapies, according to a study from UC Los Angeles. Pomegranates are a rich source of antioxidants, which have previously been touted for potential cardiovascular and other cancer benefits. The antioxidant compound punicalagin is believed to be the source of the effects seen in this study. More research is needed to confirm these findings. For more information go to *Clinical Cancer Research*, July 1 2006, Vol. 12.

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Study Concludes Blueberry Consumption May Prevent Cardiovascular Disease

A November 2005 study released by Appalachian State University's Department of Health, Leisure, and Exercise Science found that daily fruit consumption significantly reduces oxidative stress in chronic smokers. The results were obtained by observing twenty chronic smokers over a three week period. The subjects were divided into three groups: the first group consumed 250g of blueberries daily, the second group consumed 250g of blueberries right before the final blood testing and the third was a control group and did nothing. The subjects' blood was drawn at the beginning and end of the study. The study concluded that acute ingestion of fruit had no effect on oxidative stress levels in the blood while daily fruit consumption significantly reduced this oxidation. The study states that fruit consumption plays a role in preventing cardiovascular disease. For more information, go to *Free Radical Research*, November 2005.

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Understanding the Benefits found in Açai, Pomegranate, Blueberry and Luo Han Guo

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Phytonutrients, Anthocyanins and Açai

Anthocyanins, which are the polyphenols found in red pigments of fruits, are some of the most potent forms of phytonutrients. These plant pigments are primarily found in many berries, grapes, and to some degree in other fruits and vegetables. Everyone has heard of the phenomenon known as the French Paradox. The French eat all the cream, butter, foie gras, cheese and pastry that their hearts desire, and yet their rates of obesity and heart disease are much lower than people in America. One reason may be, in part, their tendency to consume wine on a daily basis. Wine, which comes from grapes, is naturally high in anthocyanins.

An exciting discovery from deep in the Amazon rainforest is a little known fruit rich in anthocyanins. The açai berry looks and tastes like a cross between a blueberry and a grape. Native to Central and South America, this fruit of the Amazonian palm is like a delicious multi-vitamin and comes loaded with omega essential fatty acids, protein, iron and B vitamins. It also packs twice as many cancer fighting antioxidants and anthocyanins as a blueberry and ten times more than the grape.

To fully appreciate why anthocyanins have beneficial effects on the body, it's helpful to know what they do for plants. One of the most important jobs of anthocyanins is to protect plants against damaging sunlight. Without the antioxidant pigments to save them, plants would rapidly deteriorate.

Anthocyanins possess a strong ability to work deeply in the human body to provide powerful protection. These essential phytonutrients have diverse physiological and pharmacological effects. Anthocyanins, together with other nutrients found in fruits and vegetables, protect against oxidative stress and associated pathologies such as cancers, heart disease and inflammation.

References:

Biomedicine and Pharmacotherapy, 2002, Volume 56, pages 200-7.

ScienceDaily, August 25, 2003

The Color Code A Revolutionary Eating Plan for Optimum Health, pages 8-9



Pomegranate Juice May Help With Coronary Heart Disease

A recent randomized, placebo-controlled, double-blind study investigated whether daily consumption of pomegranate juice for 3 months would affect myocardial perfusion in 45 patients who had ischemic coronary heart disease and myocardial ischemia. The study concluded that daily consumption of pomegranate juice may improve stress-induced myocardial ischemia in patients who have coronary heart disease. Additional research would help to confirm these findings. For more information, go to the American Journal of Cardiology, Volume 96, September 2005.

www.virtualhealthinfo.com/links/33.html

Pomegranate Shows Promise As An Antibacterial

A recent scientific research study conducted in Brazil, where pomegranate is widely used as a phytotherapeutic agent, showed that the fruit inhibits *Staphylococcus aureus* growth and subsequent enterotoxin production. Further research is needed to confirm the antibacterial properties of pomegranate. For more information, go to the Journal of Ethnopharmacology, January 2005, Volume 96.

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Luo Han Guo Exhibits Anti-Tumor Properties

In an in vitro (test tube) study on *Momordica grosvenori* (the latin name for the luo han guo), this fruit exhibited anti-tumor properties. Luo han guo is a sweet fruit cultivated in the mountains of southern China. For more information on the details of this study, go to The Journal of Agriculture Food Chemistry, November 2002, Volume 50.

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Anthocyanins and Polyphenolics May Have Protective Effect

Because of the growing interest both from consumers and researchers in the role that berries play in human health, a research study was conducted to find out if anthocyanins and other phenolics present in black currant and other dark fruits are effective in protecting cells against the oxidative damage induced by hydrogen peroxide. Results showed that the compounds do have a protective effect in cultured neuronal cells. More research in this area would help to confirm these findings. For more information go to the Journal of the Science of Food and Agriculture, published online January 2006.

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Açaí – Superfood Number 1

Açaí has recently been called “Superfood Number 1” by Dr. Nicholas Perricone, author of *The Perricone Promise Look Younger, Live Longer in Three Easy Steps*. He has given açai this title because of the numerous outstanding health-promoting properties inherent in the fruit.

Açaí contains a remarkable concentration of antioxidants. In fact, it is probably one of the richest fruit sources known. This is key because the importance of antioxidants for health cannot be overstated due to their ability to mitigate damaging free radicals, slow down the aging process and protect against many diseases. The major source of antioxidants in açai is anthocyanins. Anthocyanins are the chemical components that give the intense color to many fruits and vegetables.

Healthful fatty acids are also an exceptional feature of açai. The fatty acid component of this amazing fruit looks similar to olive oil, and is rich in monounsaturated oleic acid. Research shows that this fat has the potential to support the prevention of cardiovascular disease and cancer. It is also important in the regulation and balance of a variety of other mechanisms in the body.

References:

Journal Of Agriculture And Food Chemistry, 2004, Volume 52, pages 1539-1545
Journal Of Agriculture And Food Chemistry, Web Release Date: January 12, 2006 - <http://pubs.acs.org/cgi-bin/abstract.cgi/jafcau/asap/abs/jf052132n.html>
Journal of The American College of Nutrition, 2005, Volume 24, pages 361-9
Nutrition Review, 2005, Volume 63, pages 374-86
http://www.plantapalm.com/vpe/photos/Species/euterpe_oleracea.htm
The Perricone Promise Look Younger, Live Longer in Three Easy Steps, pages 62-63

Study Results Encouraging For Açai

In a recent University of Florida (UF) research study, extracts from açai berries triggered a self-destruct response in up to 86 percent of leukemia cells tested. According to researcher Stephen Talcott, “Açaí berries are already considered one of the richest fruit sources of antioxidants.” This study was an important step toward learning what people may gain from using beverages, dietary supplements or other products made with the berries.” He cautioned that this study was not intended, however, to prove that compounds found in açai could prevent leukemia in humans because this was only a cell-culture model. Findings are encouraging, however, and more research is needed for confirmation. Another UF study, to finish in 2006, will look at the effects of açai’s antioxidants on healthy humans. For more information, go to the Journal of Agricultural and Food Chemistry, Web Release Date: January 12, 2006.

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