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BREAST CANCER UPDATE:
INCLUDE CANCER-BLOCKING CRANBERRIES IN YOUR DIET

For Cancer Prevention, Turn on the Red!

EAST WAREHAM, MA – Could the cranberries on America’s tables play a role in keeping women’s bodies healthy and cancer-free? New breast cancer research provides another powerful reason to serve the holiday staple – all through the year.

In laboratory experiments, Canadian researchers found that isolated compounds in cranberries called flavonoids may inhibit the growth of breast cancer cells, when consumed in sufficient concentrations. These naturally occurring flavonoids may also help prevent other forms of cancer, including cancers of the prostate, colon, lung and brain.

The study, led by Dr. Peter Ferguson of the University of Western Ontario and the London Regional Cancer Program, suggests that cranberry’s flavonoids may block the further spread of estrogen-dependent breast cancer cells and cause the existing cancer cells to die. In Dr. Ferguson’s study, a cranberry extract (containing 250 mg of flavonoids per liter) inhibited breast cancer cell proliferation by 50 percent. The researchers conclude, in their recent article published in the *Journal of Nutrition*, that cranberry may be a novel anticancer agent. This has particular relevance given concern surrounding recurrence of drug-resistant tumors. The study received funding from the American Institute for Cancer Research.

Dr. Ferguson commented, “We’ve known for a long time that a diet rich in fruits and vegetables, coupled with regular exercise, is one of the most potent ways to protect the body against cancer. Our latest data suggest that cranberries may be an excellent source of cancer-preventive ingredients, and I would recommend including them as part of your regular diet.”

Dr. Martin Starr, Science Advisor to the Cranberry Institute, added, “The variety of cranberry products – such as fresh, frozen or dried cranberries, cranberry juice and cranberry sauce – all likely deliver the same benefits. So, feel free to choose the one you and your family prefer.”

Breast cancer is the leading form of cancer among American women, and ranks second only to lung cancer among cancer deaths. According to statistics from the Susan G. Komen Breast Cancer Foundation, an estimated 215,990 new cases of invasive breast cancer are expected to occur among women in the United States during 2004. An estimated 40,110 women will die from breast cancer.

In addition to cancer prevention, cranberries pack a powerhouse of protective properties that may prevent a number of other conditions. The anti-adhesion power of cranberry against the bacteria causing urinary tract infections is well known, and this same mechanism also shows promise against the various bacteria responsible for gum disease and stomach ulcers. And, the accumulating science regarding heart health benefits due to its extremely high density of various antioxidants further raises cranberry’s profile among healthful foods and beverages.

The Cranberry Institute is dedicated to supporting research and increasing awareness about the many health benefits of the cranberry. For more information, visit www.cranberryinstitute.org.

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