

Anti-oxidant Treatments and the Efficacy of Mangosteen

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More than 106,000 people die every year of adverse drug reactions (ADR's) in the United States alone, drugs which are *correctly* prescribed and administered to patients in hospitals. This does not count the many thousands more who die when their prescription is incorrectly prescribed. According to the Journal of American Medical Association, ADR's are one of the leading causes of death nationwide each year, falling closely behind cancer (529,904 deaths) and stroke (150,108 deaths). With such staggering numbers we need to seriously look at holistic alternatives that will make a difference in how we manage our health care system.

Three quarters of the world's population rely on medicinal plants as their primary source of medicine. It would be arrogant of us to look at the centuries of wisdom from other countries and say it is worthless. Enter, *Garcinia Mangostana*, commonly known as the mangosteen, a small fruit cultivated in the tropical regions of Thailand, Malaysia, and India. The mangosteen's anti-bacterial and antiseptic properties have been used for centuries to treat infected wounds and burns, tuberculosis, diarrhea, and skin disorders. Modern science has recently discovered an active group of super anti-oxidant molecules called xanthenes that are responsible for many of the fruits' healing properties.

The mangosteen may help in the fight against AIDS. Three independent studies found that an extract of *Garcinia Mangostana* showed potent inhibitory activity against the HIV-1 protease enzyme. The xanthone, *mangostin*, was shown to inhibit the replication cycle of the HIV virus. Not only are xanthenes immune modulators, which is important for any HIV patient undergoing surgery, they also prevent the protease from converting the immature virus to a mature one. In addition, certain mangosteen properties were found to be approximately 15 times more powerful than Pepstatin A, and industry standard for HIV treatment. An important link to these studies from Stanford University School of Medicine in California, found that powerful anti-oxidants, such as xanthenes, allowed the liver to produce and utilize at least three essential amino acids which helped heal disorders related to HIV infection.

In a recently published article by nutrition and cancer prevention expert, Dr. Charles Simone, over 350 studies were cited as demonstrating how anti-oxidants could extend the life of a cancer patient while improving their quality of life. Dr. Amod Tootla, nominated by Cambridge University as one of the top scientists in the world, is a pioneer of laparoscopic colon surgery and the first surgeon to use radio frequency ablation for primary and metastatic liver cancer. For the past 3 years Dr. Tootla has treated more than 1000 patients by using a potent anti-oxidant juice supplement made from the mangosteen fruit. In support of anti-oxidant supplementation, Dr. Ralph Moss's book, "Anti-Oxidants Against Cancer", outlines how anti-oxidants enhance the effectiveness of chemotherapy while minimizing their side effects. Speaking at a 2001 biomedical symposium, Dr. Moss concluded his discussion by saying, **"We can reassure patients that the overwhelming**

mass of data accumulated so far supports the concurrent use of chemotherapy with dietary anti-oxidants”.

Vitamin therapy works on a large majority of people. A study led by Dr. Simon Gilbody at the University of York and Hull York Medical School, has confirmed a link between depression and low levels of folate, a B vitamin usually available in vegetables, but which is also found abundantly in the mangosteen. Research published in the July, 2007, edition of the Journal of Epidemiology and Community Health, concluded that there was a link between depression and low folate levels after following studies involving more than 15,315 participants. Trial evidence suggests folic acid supplements can benefit people with depression. Information found on the NutritionData website provides a nutritional summary of the mangosteen. The summary reports high folate levels of 15% compared to the folate score of a raw, medium sized apple at 3.8%.

Most doctors are unaware of any scientific investigations of the mangosteen fruit and are skeptical of any purported remedies which address more than one complaint. Doctors use drugs. Drugs are intended to do only one thing in the body. Not surprisingly, doctors are skeptical of substances which fall outside this single-dimensional model that guides their practice of medicine. In her book, “The Truth About Drug Companies: How They Deceive Us and What To Do About It”, Marcia Angell M.D., editor of the New England Journal of Medicine, discusses how top U.S. pharmaceutical companies promote diseases to fit their drugs and attempt to convince healthy people they have a disease. She believes that doctors are drawn into business marketing tactics by offering free sample drugs with no alternative solution. Frankly, drug companies cannot patent nutrients and don't spend money researching them.

To give an example, leading mangosteen researcher, Professor Nakatani from Japan, was recently seconded by Pfizer Pharmaceuticals. Dr. Nakatani may no longer discuss his research surrounding the mangosteen's powerful anti-inflammatory properties. Why would a drug giant such as Pfizer be so interested in the mangosteen? Could it be to turn it into a drug?

The mangosteen cannot address all ills, it cannot resolve all health concerns, but it is a worthwhile supplement with versatility and promise. With over 70 years of modern science validating the usage and safety of the mangosteen, and over 2000 years of traditional medical history expounding its qualities, it is time to seriously look at this health alternative.

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