Natural Compounds That Stop Cancer

A drug to cure cancer is the Holy Grail for drug companies. It would be the ultimate trillion dollar winning lottery ticket. We hear about the fight to stop cancer all the time. What we don’t hear is that cancer, in most cases, is caused by our lifestyle—not by some mysterious unknown force.

In fact, these causes are all around us: smoking, chemical exposure, pesticides, nutrient deficiencies, excessive sun exposure, and even many of the conventional prescription and over-the-counter drugs Americans take every day. And bear in mind, those are the same drugs recognized by the American Medical Association (AMA) as being part of “responsible medicine.”

For example, every spring we hear about the need to use a lot of sunscreen in order to prevent skin cancer. But skin cancer is not due to a lack of sunscreen. Decades ago, we had far fewer incidences of skin cancer, and no sunscreen. And of course, the cases of non-melanoma skin cancer, including squamous cell carcinoma and basal cell carcinoma, are significant public health concerns worldwide.

But here again, my concern is that the AMA supports drug companies and the use of drugs to treat skin cancer (and most forms of cancer) without adequately educating the public as to how to prevent disease. Many studies have proven that a healthy, cancer-preventing diet could be far more effective and incredibly less costly than conventional care.

Countries around the world that pay for public health actually encourage well studied natural products. In Europe, most of the ingredients and formulas that are considered supplements here are rightly acknowledged as medicines.

There is a family of naturally occurring plant compounds found and widely distributed in plant foods such as fruits, vegetables, nuts, seeds, flowers, bark, roots, and rhizomes. These compounds are known as polyphenols and contribute to the beneficial effects of dietary products. The regular intake of these natural plant compounds in our diet has gained attention for their ability to provide protection against the adverse effects of UV radiation and possibly skin cancer.

Even though we hear the word “antioxidant” quite a bit these days, it is wise to remember that 80-90% of all our diseases are caused by oxidative stress and inflammation.

Our diet in the early 1900s was still composed of foods which provided polyphenols that acted as powerful antioxidants and anti-inflammatory compounds. These compounds protected all the cells in our body from premature aging, various diseases, and most cancers. In the early 1900s, cancer was the 7th most common cause of death. Today, it is second only to heart disease.

But why is that? Our diet is mostly responsible, and conventional medicine isn’t helping.

Few Americans today eat a diet that includes multiple servings of fruits, vegetables, nuts, seeds, berries and legumes. Americans are consuming a diet today that lacks protective factors that may possibly protect us against many of these diseases.

The AMA and drug companies are only concerned with satisfying and protecting their shareholders with the new blockbuster drug that will reap billions of dollars. They will not protect Americans who believe that diet has nothing to do with good health and drugs will save them. But FOOD IS OUR BEST MEDICINE.

Our world has survived for millions of years with only plant medicines—which today still treat 95 percent of the population of the planet. There was a time when we knew how to take care of ourselves. Remedies and traditions were passed along and the knowledge was highly valued. Our very republic was founded on the principles and virtues of a balance of self-sufficiency and community, but this has been slipping away. Over the last few decades power and greed has captured the AMA, drug companies, and the politicians who protect their interests. When you discover that 60 percent of all drugs manufactured worldwide are prescribed in America, and 80 percent of all pain killers manufactured worldwide are consumed by Americans, something is out of kilter.

Industrial agriculture and what has come to be known as “Big Food” have only complicated the problem. We now have generations of Americans who have grown up on foods that lack the basic nutrients we all need every day. And over time, this has an inevitable effect. Our bodies begin to break down. Doctors diagnose this as a disease, and prime us to take more drugs, when the real problem is a lack of nutrition.

Before drugs became the money-making Holy Grail that they are today, all diseases were cured by the vitamins and minerals found naturally. Our diets and the powerful plant compounds available to us are all we need to be healthy. My advice is simple: change your diet and change your health.
The Top Two Natural Compounds That Stop Disease

The top two natural compounds you need to stop disease are curcumin and grape seed extract. They are an amazing pair, working along two different pathways; fat soluble for curcumin, and water soluble for grape seed extract. And the impact they can make on your health is virtually miraculous.

Now, both of these sources are available from foods—to a very small extent. From curry, you can get trace amounts of curcumin. From some wines, you may get some of the polyphenols from grape seeds, although it’s not likely. So, while a healthy diet is key, the best way to get these natural cancer fighters is through high-absorption extracts.

Curcumin, the powerful compound found in turmeric (Curcuma longa), is a potent antioxidant and inflammation fighter. It neutralizes unstable free radicals that steal electrons from neighboring molecules, and stops them from creating a cascade of cellular damage. It inhibits inflammatory markers in the body to prevent tissue degradation. However, not all curcumin extracts are the same, and many are difficult for the body to absorb. In my years of research, the most effective curcumin extract is one that is made into a very fine powder and then blended with turmeric essential oils for greater absorption compared to plain curcumin. This same curcumin does more than simply absorb. It stays in the bloodstream—at significant levels. That means it isn’t simply “spiking” when you use it, it sticks around to fight threats to your health.

Curcumin has been shown to stop cancer initiation, promotion and progression. It prevents the changes that cause normal cells to become cancerous, stops the replication of cancerous cells (tumor formation), and stops cancerous cells from migrating to other parts of the body (known as metastasis). Published studies on curcumin’s anticancer activity (so far) have found that it can suppress breast, prostate, liver, skin, colon and lung cancer.

Additionally, curcumin has been shown to increase the activity of anticancer drugs and to decrease drug resistance in cancer cells (meaning it helps cancer drugs kill tumors more efficiently). It also protects normal cells from the toxic effects of chemotherapy drugs and radiation treatments. This means that using curcumin in combination with chemotherapy drugs may mean less of the toxic drugs are required, but the results will be better, with significantly reduced side effects.

A recent study showed that curcumin in combination with the chemotherapy drug, 5-FU, made the drug more effective in treating colon cancer cells. This is a huge breakthrough, because as cancer cells become more resistant to chemotherapy, most people have to suffer through higher (and even more toxic) levels of the treatment. Curcumin—that gift from nature that has been here all along—helps our complicated medicines do the job that curcumin could probably do on its own.

Grape seed extract is also a potent tumor inhibitor. Grape seed oligomeric proanthocyanidins (OPCs)—components known for their cell-saving properties—have been intensively studied for about 40 years. However, much like curcumin, grape seed OPCs can only be useful if they are absorbed. Many grape seed extracts contain tannins, which have too high of a molecular weight to be truly useful—to simplify it, they are simply too big to be absorbed. That’s why I recommend a tannin-free, high-OPC French grape seed extract.

And grape seed extracts are not some “out there” therapeutic ingredient. Grape seed OPCs are on the front line of cancer research. Some of the most exciting studies have been done at the University of Colorado Anschutz Medical Campus. Their research of grape seed extract has shown that this powerful botanical ingredient has the ability to target specific colon cancer cells, while still leaving healthy cells intact.

Other research at the University of Colorado has shown that grape seed extract decreased the formation of lung nodules—metastasized from colon cancer—by 35 percent, and their entire number by 66 percent. Colon cancer (and complications caused by it) is the second-leading cause of cancer-related deaths, so this is a remarkable achievement.

Still other work examined the effect of grape seed extract on breast carcinoma cells when used alone or with a conventional treatment. Their results showed that the two interventions worked well together, but that grape seed extract alone was a strong inhibitor of breast cancer cells. These results have been mirrored in other research showing that grape seed extract polyphenols have a strong ability to stop tumor growth.

One of the reasons for this is that grape seed extract inhibits aromatase, an enzyme that converts androgen into estrogen. Breast and prostate cancer tissues typically have higher levels of aromatase. A study published in the journal Cancer Research showed that grape seed extract inhibited aromatase activity and reduced growth in MCF-7 breast cancer cells. The researchers concluded, “We believe that these results are exciting in that they show grape seed extract to be potentially useful in the prevention/treatment of hormone-dependent breast cancer through the inhibition of aromatase activity as well as its expression.”

Recent Australian research found that grape seed extract reduced the severity of mucositis, the painful inflammation of the digestive tract due to chemotherapy, and enhanced the effectiveness of chemotherapy in fighting colon cancer.

If you spend a lot of time outdoors and skin cancer is a concern, grape seed extract may offer protection: a Romanian study reported that keratinocytes (the major type of cells in the outer layer of the skin) treated with grape seed extract 30 minutes before UVB radiation protected them from damage.

You CAN Take Charge of Your Health

And of course, that’s not all. New research is being done on curcumin and grape seed extract OPCs all the time. As more people become more aware of these developments, I believe a second American revolution—a revolution in health—will be the result.

You are NOT at the mercy of conventional medicines, or a standard American diet. You can take steps today to change how you eat, and begin healing immediately with curcumin and grape seed extract. With these nutrients, oxidative damage to your cells is not inevitable. They can stop and reverse its progress and preserve your health. High-absorption curcumin and high-OPC grape seed extract with absorbable proanthocyanidins, make an unbeatable combination of the strongest natural protection available.

When in doubt, always consult your physician or health care practitioner. This column is to provide you with information to maintain your health.

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