

Olive Oil Wins Over Red Wine in Life Extending Properties

By Silvia Pinca, NaturalNews

On May 11th, in Geneva, Switzerland, a new award in nutritional supplements went to an Italo-Californian company for extracting the very key component of the Mediterranean diet: hydroxytyrosol, a very potent polyphenol that has antioxidant properties, beat those of the well known red grape seeds that gave people a good pretext for drinking red wine as a life-extending measure.

The prize, named Outstanding Application in Health Management, is part of a series of yearly awards considered to be the Oscars of nutraceuticals - food derivatives providing health and medical benefits - and is granted in recognition of scientific and technological progress in a field that interlaces food, biotechnology and sustainability. The creation of functional food and biologic health-improving treatments by extraction from plant and microorganism sources are honored as innovations that focus on the natural needs of human beings while respecting a zero-waste philosophy benefiting the planet. The awarded oil company responds perfectly well to such requisites, not only by producing a precious food derivative and supplement, but at the same time, and in the same process, for limiting the impact on the environment in the olive oil production.

The miraculous product was found almost by chance in the waters produced during the pressing of oils, which the discoverers found to contain polyphenols in concentration 300 times higher than those found in extra virgin olive oil. The hydroxytyrosol there contained has amazing free radical scavenging action accountable for the strong anti-inflammatory, antimicrobial, antiviral, anti-cancer and antithrombotic potential observed. It has been shown to be very effective in managing conditions, such as psoriasis, eczema, skin UV-induced damage, arthritis, osteoporosis, cardiovascular diseases and nervous system degeneration, and in preventing breast and colon cancer, as well as in the reduction of stress from secondary smoke.

Hydroxytyrosol derives from the hydrolysis of hydroxytyrol, also an active antioxidant compound found in olives but of very slow absorption in the gut. Contrarily, hydroxytyrosol is characterized by much higher bioavailability and even by the ability to cross the brain barrier so that it can display its antioxidant power in the central and peripheral nervous system.

The antioxidant capacity of hydroxytyrosol has been measured to be the second highest recorded in any plant product after garlic and is almost three times higher than grape seeds and green tea. A relative of this compound, oleuropein, is contained in high amount in the leaf of the olive tree and is present in olive leaf extract, which is used for its strong antibiotic properties. However, this is much less powerful and is more poorly absorbed into the blood stream compared to hydroxytyrosol.

By following ancient traditions of production of olive oils by Italian ancestors in the time of Magna Graecia, the pressing of the olives is currently done after the elimination of the pits in order not only to increase the sweetness and the pH of the final product, but also to remove the enzymes and fatty acids responsible of the oxidation, which consumes the beneficial components.

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The extraction of such a potent supplement is done from what was before considered waste water to be eliminated. Such water from the pressing process is now saved, and the precious compound is extracted and stored in powder form of different concentrations to be used as premium dietary supplement or for production of natural skin care products. Therefore such a process produces also a gain to the environment. If this practice were to be adopted by all oil producers, it could eliminate 10.4 billion gallons of what were considered toxic waters from world liquid waste.

<http://pubs.acs.org/doi/abs/10.1021...>

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About the author

I am a doctor in marine sciences and worked for conservation of marine reefs and subsistence fisheries for 20 years. I am now enrolled in an Advanced Course in Naturopathy and have obtained certifications in traditional massage (Thai and Lomi Lomi) in Thailand and Hawai'i. I practice these massages for helping people finding their lost structural and emotional balance.