



## MEDIA RELEASE

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### Increase your Superfood intake with cranberries

'Superfood' is a term used to describe food with high phytonutrient content, or generally speaking, food considered especially nutritious or otherwise beneficial to health and well-being.<sup>1</sup> Given this, we all know superfoods should be incorporated into our diets as much as possible and according to a multitude of research, there is one little, dark red berry – the cranberry – that well and truly deserves to stand up and be noticed as a superfood.

Cranberries are considered a superfood because they contain unique compounds known as proanthocyanidins (PACs), which prevent certain bacteria from adhering to cell walls. It is this anti-adhesion ability that helps cranberries prevent urinary tract infections, stomach ulcers and even dental plaque. In addition to PACs, cranberries contain other classes of flavonoids with antioxidant properties, called flavonols and anthocyanins, the latter of which give cranberries their rich red color.

In fact, the cranberry has been shown to contain among the highest phytonutrient content among 21 commonly consumed fruits and vegetables, and possesses the most potent antioxidant properties.<sup>2</sup>

It's this powerful combination of antioxidants, coupled with the anti-adhesion effect of cranberries, that makes them so special for you, and all the more reason to start including in your diet. Therefore, it's no surprise that medical and health experts are throwing their support behind cranberries. As Joe Vinson, Ph.D., research chemist at the University of Scranton believes, "Cranberries are loaded with antioxidants and should be eaten more often."<sup>3</sup>

In case you need any more convincing, check out the superfood cranberry's impressive hit list of health benefits below:

#### ✓ **Cranberries and urinary tract health**

In the case of urinary tract infections (UTIs), the anti-adhesion effect of cranberries causes bacteria to be flushed out of the urinary tract before an infection in the bladder or kidney can occur. A study conducted found that those who drink cranberry juice or eat cranberries daily can significantly reduce their risk of a UTI by as much as 50%.<sup>4</sup>

#### ✓ **Cranberries and dental health**

A study published in the *Journal of the American Dental Association* reported that the unique "anti-adhesion" properties of cranberries may help in the prevention of the oral bacteria responsible for dental plaque and periodontal disease<sup>5</sup>, a leading cause of tooth loss.

#### ✓ **Cranberries and stomach health**

Substances found in cranberries can prevent certain bacteria from adhering in the lining of the stomach. Early studies suggest the anti-adhesion effect may be beneficial in preventing the bacteria responsible for stomach ulcers, which are a leading cause of stomach cancer.

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<sup>1</sup> OED, online edition, additions September 2007, entry for *super-*

<sup>2</sup> Vinson, J.A., Su, X. Zubik, L. and Bose, P. Phenol antioxidant quantity and quality in foods: Fruits. *Journal of Agriculture and Food Chemistry*, 2001. 49(11): 5315-5312.

<sup>3</sup> <http://www.cranberryinstitute.org/healthresearch.htm>

<sup>4</sup> Wyndham, R. Cranberry Juice and Urinary Tract Infections. *Medicine Today*, 2006 Vol 7, Number 5. 72-73.

<sup>5</sup> Krueger, C.G., Porter, M.L., Weibe, D.A., Cunningham, D.G., and Reed, J.D. Potential of cranberry flavonoids in the prevention of copper-induced LDL oxidation. *Polyphenols Communications*, 2000. Freising-Weihenstephan (Germany). 2: 447-448.

### ✓ **Cranberries and heart health**

Flavonoids, found in abundance in cranberries, have been shown to function as potent antioxidants and may help reduce the risk of atherosclerosis and heart disease. Ongoing research continues in this area.<sup>5</sup>

### ✓ **Cranberries and anti-aging**

Cranberries have one of the highest antioxidant levels of all fruits, which may have the potential to make them a true anti-aging wonder. These bioactive substances protect cells from free radicals which not only promote the aging process, but can lead to the development of certain chronic diseases as well. Exciting emerging research suggests an improvement in short term memory, although further research is needed in this area. Cranberry extract may also help ward off memory loss and improve brain health.

### ✓ **Cranberries and cancer**

Canadian researchers have found that flavonoids found in cranberries may inhibit the growth of breast cancer cells when consumed in sufficient concentrations, and as such, may also help prevent other forms of cancer, including cancers of the prostate, colon, lung and brain. Preliminary research has shown a reduction in tumour cell development by 50 percent, inhibiting growth in lung, colon and leukaemia cells.<sup>6</sup>

Dr Martin Starr, Science Advisor to the Cranberry Institute, said " There is a lot of research available to suggest cranberries in all forms should be a regular part of your diet."

By consuming two portions of cranberries a day (frozen, dried, sauce or juice) you can tap into these amazing health properties and provide around the clock protection for overall body health. This should be easy, given the versatility of cranberries in either savoury or sweet dishes! The anti-adhesion effect begins approximately two hours after consumption, and remains for up to ten hours.

Dr Starr added "the variety of cranberry products – such as fresh, frozen or dried cranberries, cranberry juice and cranberry sauce – are all likely to deliver similar benefits on the basis of their cranberry content."

So make sure you add cranberries to your next shopping list as one superfood to start enjoying their amazing health benefits – check out [www.cranberries.com.au](http://www.cranberries.com.au) for delicious recipe ideas and more information.

## **ENDS**

Issued on behalf of the Cranberry Marketing Committee by Hill & Knowlton

The Cranberry Institute is dedicated to supporting research and increasing awareness about the health benefits of cranberries. For more information visit [www.cranberryinstitute.org](http://www.cranberryinstitute.org) or [www.cranberries.com.au](http://www.cranberries.com.au).

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<sup>6</sup> Catherine C Neto<sup>1\* et al</sup>, *MALDI-TOF MS characterization of proanthocyanidins from cranberry fruit (Vaccinium macrocarpon) that inhibit tumor cell growth and matrix metalloproteinase expression in vitro.* [Journal of the Science of Food and Agriculture](#), 2006 Vol 86 Issue 1 18-25