

Fresh olive leaves

It's not just the fruit of the olive tree that is good for us.

The best-known diet linked to good health and long life is a Mediterranean style of eating. It's been studied from many angles. Loaded with natural, fresh fruit and vegetables, it seems to have protective effects against a range of lifestyle diseases like heart disease and cancer. Researchers have discovered that these health benefits are also linked to the high intake of olives and olive oil. Extra virgin olive oil is particularly known for its heart health benefits.

What isn't so well known is that for many centuries, Mediterranean people have also used the fresh leaves from the olive tree for their healing properties. In fact, the earliest known use of fresh olive leaves for medicinal purposes appears to come from the ancient Egyptians.

What is so special about them? Olive trees live much longer than any other fruit tree on the planet. They survive for centuries, resisting attack from pests, extremes of heat and cold, droughts, viruses and bacteria. What's their secret? And is it good news for humans?

Current research shows there are around 100 naturally occurring compounds in fresh olive leaves. These all work together in 'natural synergy' to provide an effective year-round defence system for the olive tree. These compounds include a unique group of powerful polyphenolic antioxidants.

Amongst other things, polyphenolic antioxidants are potent scavengers of free-radicals. In simple terms, they defend their cells against attack and damage.

Research suggests these same compounds from fresh olive leaves have the potential to significantly enhance human health as well. Recent studies by Olive Leaf Australia show that liquid olive leaf extract made from fresh Australian olive leaves has up to 40 times more antioxidants than even the very best extra virgin olive oils. The same fresh Olive Leaf Extract also has five times more antioxidant power than Vitamin C.

The polyphenolic antioxidants in fresh olive leaf extract are now being researched for a broad spectrum of functions. This includes lowering blood pressure anti-inflammatory and anti-thrombotic activities. They also show anti-microbial activity against a variety of viruses, bacteria and yeasts.

Dr. Morton Walker is a world renowned, award winning health researcher and writer. He says, "Based on my research, I am convinced that olive leaf extract is destined to become the most useful, wide spectrum herbal ingredient of the 21st century."

The ancient, long living Olive Tree has an impressive, healthy track record, and now its powerful defence systems can be harnessed for our own wellbeing. NH

