

DR. CHRISTOPHER'S *Herbal Legacy Newsletter*

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Cranberries for all Seasons-David Christopher MH

Since 1621 A.D. Americans have associated cranberries with pilgrims and eat them at least once a year for Thanksgiving. They became a national tradition after the Civil War. It seems General Ulysses S. Grant had cranberry sauce served to the troops on Thanksgiving during the siege of Petersburg in 1864. The soldiers liked them and the custom initiated on that and other holidays. Cranberries are so sour that they haven't become an everyday part of our diets.

Americans as a whole eat bland diets eschewing bitter and sour and clinging to sweet and salty foods. When sour is used it is usually combined with a lot of sugar, hence the accepted cranberry juice cocktails and cranberry sauces, which are too sweet to be consumed regularly. Cranberries first medicinal use was in curing scurvy, but any vitamin C rich foods will

accomplish that purpose. Where cranberry is unique is in its ability to clear up urinary tract infections (U.T.I).

It was first thought that cranberry acidified the urine via hippuric acid which was detected in the urine of those consuming cranberries. Though dismissed in the sixties because of tests showing the acid in urine was not acidic enough to kill bacteria, I believe that scientists were premature. The hippuric acid has been found to be antibacterial. However, the current philosophy for cranberries is that it prevents bacteria from adhering to the cells in the colon. This quality is fantastic and lets this simple food trump all the antibiotics. Whether it is



the attraction and adherence to the polysaccharides or the interference of the proanthocyanidins doesn't matter, the studies show that cranberries stop U.T.I.s. A problem with cranberry today is the added sugar and also that a person has to drink a lot of cranberry juice cocktail for it to be effective. A solution would be to mix unsweetened cranberry juice with fresh pressed apple juice.

My personal experiences with cranberry therapy, is combining two capsules of Dr. Christopher's

Kidney Formula with one capsule of Solaray Cranactin and taking it orally with a full glass of water, three times a day. The Cranactin prevents bacteria adherence and the herbs in the Kidney Formula destroy bacteria which have already adhered and are not subject to the effects of cranberry. I have not seen this procedure fail.

So far the only other food found that has this anti adherence factor for bacteria, is blueberries, which have a weaker effect. The action of these berries also works on cavity causing bacteria in the mouth and the H. pylori bacteria that is present in gastric ulcers.

Cranberries are high in antioxidants and flavonoids which are excellent for the heart and help keep the vascular system free from accumulated LDL cholesterol.

In conclusion cranberries can prevent bacterial growth by keeping it from adhering to cells and can help fortify the vascular system, assuring deliverance of vital nutrients and oxygen, thus assuring healthy longevity. Truly it is a medicinal food for all seasons.

David Christopher is a Master Herbalist and the director of The School of Natural Healing. He also co-hosts the popular radio show "A Healthier You" and is a popular international teacher and lecturer.