Pygeum Africanum Prevents Prostate Cancer

New research adds further credence to the notion that it may be possible to prevent the occurrence of prostate cancer through the regular use of botanical extracts.*

Scientists at the University of Missouri-Columbia showed that an extract of *Pygeum africanum* is capable of inhibiting growth and inducing cellular suicide in two standard human prostate cancer cell lines in tissue culture. Furthermore, the extract was shown to sharply reduce the incidence of prostate cancer in laboratory mice genetically engineered to develop the disease.

Extracts of the bark of the *Pygeum africanum*, or African plum, tree have been used for the control of benign prostatic hyperplasia (BPH) in Europe for a number of years, and more recently, for promotion of general prostate health and prostate cancer prevention in the United States.

"*Pygeum africanum...has a significant role in regulation of prostate cancer...and therefore may be a useful supplement for people at high risk for developing prostate cancer,"* researchers concluded.

---Dale Kiefer


**LEF Board Member Addresses European Stem Cell Congress**

Life Extension Foundation board member, Michael West, PhD, unveiled promising new avenues of stem cell research at the European Stem Cells & Regenerative Medicine Congress earlier this year in London, England.*

In his talk, “Mapping the human embryome: multiplex strategies for the purification and characterization of human embryonic progenitor cells,” Dr. West focused on pioneering plans to create the first systematic map of all the cell types derived from human embryonic stem cells as was done with human DNA or genome mapping in the 1990s.

He hopes that this map will speed the day when stem cells will be used as immune-compatible cell therapies for degenerative diseases associated with aging.

Dr. West is CEO of BioTime, Inc, a California-based manufacturer of medical and surgical supplies, including artificial blood replacement products. BioTime's wholly owned subsidiary, Embryome Sciences, Inc, is leading the company's foray into the promising field of regenerative medicine with plans to develop new medical and research products using embryonic stem cell technology. The Life Extension Foundation helps to financially support Dr. West's stem cell research.

---Dale Kiefer


**Beta Carotene Protects Against Sunburn**

Supplementation with beta carotene markedly reduces the likelihood of sunburn, according to a recent review of the literature.* Beta carotene is a well-known antioxidant that may have anti-aging effects in the skin.

German researchers conducted a meta-analysis and identified seven relevant studies of the association between beta carotene supplementation and sunburn risk. The pooled data showed a beneficial effect of beta carotene. Protection became significant only after at least 10 weeks of supplementation and increased with each additional month of beta carotene use.

Although beta carotene achieves a sun protection factor (SPF) of about four, much lower than sunscreens, supplementation achieves a chronic rather than acute type of protection that is uniform over the skin surface. The authors conclude that “topical application of sunscreens and systemic photoprotection with beta carotene are not competing strategies which are intended to replace each other, but instead they are complementary in nature and should be combined.”

---Laura J. Ninger, ELS

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