Cinnamon may help promote healthy blood pressure levels in those suffering from elevated blood pressure (hypertension), according to a report in the Journal of the American College of Nutrition.1

While cinnamon is known to help support healthy blood sugar levels, this study was the first to report its beneficial effects on blood pressure. High blood pressure commonly accompanies diabetes and increases the risks of cardiovascular disease and stroke.

Using an animal model, researchers investigated the blood pressure-modulating effects of both whole cinnamon and aqueous cinnamon extracts. Supplementing the hypertensive animals' diets with either whole cinnamon or aqueous cinnamon extract led to decreases in systolic blood pressure. While both extracts promoted beneficial changes in blood pressure, scientists have expressed concerns regarding the toxicity associated with long-term consumption of high doses of whole cinnamon.

Aqueous cinnamon extracts may thus provide an ideal way to safely capture the benefits of cinnamon.

—Elizabeth Wagner, ND

Lignans May Protect Against Breast Cancer

Plentiful intake of plant lignans could reduce the risk of breast cancer in premenopausal women, report researchers in Germany.1

Lignans, which are present in dietary sources such as flaxseed, sesame seeds, fruits, and vegetables, are metabolized by microorganisms in the colon to phytoestrogens such as enterolactone. Scientists found that premenopausal women with greater dietary intake of lignans and higher plasma enterolactone levels demonstrated a substantially decreased risk of breast cancer.

Since breast cancer diagnoses are on the rise, lignans may provide important support for optimal breast health.

—Elizabeth Wagner, ND