Rhodiola Shows Promising Anti-Aging Activity

*Rhodiola rosea* is an Arctic herb popular with traditional Chinese and Eastern European medical practitioners, who believe its roots alleviate depression, relieve stress, and eliminate fatigue. Classified by modern scientists as an “adaptogen,” it evidently helps the body resist a variety of chemical, biological, and physical stressors. Evidence also suggests that rhodiola exhibits cardioprotective and anticancer benefits.¹

Now scientists at the University of California, Irvine, say rhodiola may also offer previously undiscovered anti-aging benefits.² Working with the common fruit fly, investigators conducted a simple experiment. One group of flies received rhodiola in the diet, while a control group did not. Rhodiola “significantly increased the life span” of test flies, which “exhibited decelerated aging,” compared with control flies. Results did not reveal the specific mechanism at work, but researchers noted the effect did not rely on dietary manipulation, “strongly suggesting that rhodiola is not a mere dietary restriction mimic,” a reference to the fact that calorie restriction is known to extend life span in a variety of organisms.¹

EPA from Fish Oil May Prevent Schizophrenia

Fish oil, especially eicosapentaenoic acid (EPA), could help prevent the development of schizophrenia in teenagers and young adults, according to a promising study from Australia.³ Omega-3 fatty acid deficits have previously been noted in a variety of neuropsychiatric disorders, including schizophrenia, depression, and Alzheimer’s disease.³

For three months researchers gave 1.5 g fish oil or placebo to young people at risk of developing schizophrenia. At one-year follow-up, only 5% of the fish oil group showed signs of psychosis, while 28% of the placebo group had developed psychosis.¹ The scientists noted that early prevention may have been key to averting the disorder.

In an earlier study, the researchers found that adding EPA to standard antipsychotic drug therapy “may accelerate treatment response and improve the tolerability of antipsychotic medications” in schizophrenia patients.² Other studies have similarly noted that EPA holds promise as an adjuvant treatment approach for the disorder.⁴⁻⁵

—Dale Kiefer


Pomegranate Inhibits Prostate Cancer: New Evidence

Exciting new research reveals yet another way in which pomegranate may help fight prostate cancer—through inhibiting angiogenesis, the process whereby tumors grow new blood vessels to support their growth.¹ Previous studies have suggested that pomegranate juice and extracts slow the progression of prostate cancer and kill prostate cancer cells grown in the laboratory.²³

When mice that had been injected with human prostate cancer cells received dietary pomegranate extract, tumor size decreased. The density of blood vessels supplying the tumors declined, and levels of two important markers of angiogenesis also diminished.¹

“These results demonstrate that an ellagitannin-rich pomegranate extract can inhibit tumor-associated angiogenesis as one of several potential mechanisms for slowing the growth of prostate cancer,” concluded investigators.¹

—Dale Kiefer

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