



Tea and Health

Tea has been an important part of Chinese medicine for 5000 years. In recent years, and on a continuing basis, the medical community has published reports on the positive effects of tea for health and well-being. The following is a summary of substantiated findings for teas from the "tea bush", including black, green, oolong, white and Pu-erh.

Cancer - Studies have shown that the antioxidant properties of tea are effective against cancer by inhibiting the formation of cancer causing substances.

Immune system - Tea is high in L-Theanine, which is a main building block of the antibodies in the immune system. Also, polyphenols, the primary active ingredients of tea, have been shown to help increase the white blood cell count. Green tea is high in vitamin C.

Cardiovascular - Research suggests that a diet rich in antioxidants found in tea decreases the risk of heart disease and stroke. Phytochemicals in tea have been shown to stimulate the circulatory system, strengthen blood vessels and decrease the cholesterol level in the bloodstream.

Body weight - Tea is known as the "slimming herb" in China. Research indicates that certain teas assist in reducing weight by breaking down fats in the blood stream and in the tissues.

Teeth and bones - Tea is rich in fluorides, a mineral that strengthens both tooth enamel and bones. The polyphenols in tea reduce bacteria in the mouth, thereby retarding the formation of plaque.

Germicidal and antibacterial - Studies indicate that tea acts as a mild germicide. In the digestive tract it helps fight food poisoning and diseases like cholera, typhoid and dysentery. Tea is used in China to disinfect cuts and abrasions and to cure skin disease.

Digestion - Polyphenols and essential oils in tea aid digestion by increasing the flow of digestive juices. Drinking tea during or after a high cholesterol meal has been shown to lessen fat content in the blood.

Mental activity - Tea drinking improves concentration, alertness and problem solving abilities.

Longevity - The sum of the curative and preventive health benefits of tea indicates that tea has life prolonging properties.

To summarize, Dr. Jack Bukowski of Harvard Medical School ended a recent lecture on the health benefits of tea by saying, simply: "*Drink more tea*".