



Berry Well!

What do wine, green tea, and blueberries have in common?

ANTIOXIDANTS

by Dr. Samuel N. Grief, MD

Berries contain large quantities of antioxidants. Studies have implicated these antioxidants in slowing the aging process and lowering one's risk for many diseases, including certain cancers and heart disease. Antioxidant-rich berries are now being recommended to treat specific medical conditions, including bladder infections, arthritis, and visual problems.



Recent studies confirm that dark red and blue berries help stabilize the collagen in the cartilage of major joints. Cartilage is better known as the "cushion" of the joint. Thus, improving the integrity of the cartilage will most likely reduce pain, swelling, and inflammation that often accompany the ravages of arthritis.

There are many different varieties of berries in the United States. The most commonly

used include blackberries, black currant, blueberries, boysenberries, cranberries, lingonberries, raspberries, and strawberries. It is known that the darker the berry, the more antioxidant it contains. These berry antioxidants, also known as anthocyanins, are specific pigments found abundantly in plants. Blueberries have the most anthocyanins of all the berries.

Juice made from berries is not as rich in antioxidants and should be consumed in modera-



tion given its sugar load. People with diabetes should take extra care in monitoring how juice affects their blood sugar.

When buying berries, choose fresh berries in season when possible since these fruit are among the most perishable. Keep berries no longer than 2-3 days as their taste and antioxidant potential will decrease rapidly thereafter.

Berries are truly Mother Nature's gift to us. Enjoy in good health! Visit our online chats and blogs at www.radthemag.com

Dr. Grief is a graduate of McGill University in Montreal, Canada. He is a past Residency Program Director of the University of Illinois at Chicago Department of Family Medicine, and former radio health show host in New Hampshire. Dr. Grief's main interest is teaching about nutrition and obesity management, and he has co-authored a book, "The End of Obesity".



A surprisingly good source of antioxidants is