
Black Currants May Help Thwart Alzheimers

They contain compounds that protected cells in lab study
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Compounds in black currants may help protect against Alzheimer's disease, according to a study in the current issue of Chemistry & Industry magazine.

Researchers found that these compounds - anthocyanins and polyphenolics - had a strong protective effect in cultured neuronal cells. Darker black currants contain more anthocyanins and are likely to be more potent.

"These compounds also work in hippocampal cells taken straight from the brain," researcher James Joseph of Tufts University said in a prepared statement. He said these protective effects will likely be reproduced in the human body and that these compounds may prevent or significantly delay the onset of Alzheimer's.

While previous research found that compounds in black currants acted as antioxidants, this is the first study to demonstrate that they may help protect brain cells. Exactly how they do this remains unclear, the study said.

"We have evidence that the compounds protect against Alzheimer's by influencing the early gene expression in learning and memory, which influences cell signaling pathways that help neuronal cells communicate with each other," Joseph said.

More information:

The U.S. National Institutes of Health has more about Alzheimer prevention - www.alzheimers.org