

*“Superfruit” Makes the Headlines Again:*

## Beneficial Compounds in Pomegranate Guard Against Major Health Threats

In a recent article published in the *New York Times*, renowned nutritionist and author Jonny Bowden, Ph.D., C.N.S., lists several healthful foods people should be including in their diets, but aren't. One of his eleven “favorites” is **pomegranate**, because it helps protect the heart.<sup>1</sup> Dr. Bowden has joined a growing number of nutritional experts who are recommending pomegranate for its impressive health-promoting properties. Notable among these experts is researcher Navindra Seeram, Ph.D., the Assistant Director of the UCLA Center for Human Nutrition and editor of a new book entitled *Pomegranates: Ancient Roots to Modern Medicine*.<sup>2</sup> As Dr. Seeram explains, berry fruits, including pomegranate, have profound, positive impact on human health, performance and disease.<sup>3</sup> According to Dr. Seeram's co-editor, Dr. Risa Schulman, “the pomegranate is truly a twenty-first century natural medicine.”

*Recent published research has focused on pomegranate's ability to prevent and treat cardiovascular disease, stroke, diabetes and various forms of cancer, especially prostate cancer.*<sup>4</sup>

Although pomegranates have been cultivated for thousands of years, the health-promoting properties of this “superfruit” have only recently come to the attention of the American public. Pomegranates grow on shrubs or small trees, and are believed to be native to the Middle East and India.<sup>4</sup> Interestingly, the reddish-colored pomegranate fruit is one of the seven food staples of the land of Israel mentioned in the Old Testament.

Recent published research has focused on pomegranate's ability to **prevent and treat cardiovascular disease, stroke, diabetes** and various forms of **cancer, especially prostate cancer**.<sup>4</sup> Natural compounds in pomegranates may even thwart osteoarthritis, according to new findings.<sup>5,6</sup>

### Getting Maximum Benefits from a Pomegranate Supplement

The health benefits of pomegranate are attributed to the high levels and wide variety of the fruit's unique phytochemicals. The synergistic (combined) action of the pomegranate constituents appears to be superior to that of single constituents.<sup>7</sup>

Of the pomegranate's natural protective ingredients, *punicalagins* have been established as the chemical marker compounds that should be used for the authentication, quality control and standardization of pomegranate products.<sup>8</sup> When choosing a pomegranate supplement, it is, therefore, important to select a clinically-tested, [natural-spectrum pomegranate whole fruit extract](#) that is standardized for both punicalagins and total polyphenol content.<sup>9</sup>

### References

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