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**Foods, Not Drugs, May Be Best Approach to Fighting Arthritis Pain**  
***Cherries Top the List of Inflammation-Fighting Foods***

**LANSING, Mich., May 3, 2010** –Arthritis affects about one-quarter of Americans and has been called “the coming epidemic” by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. More than 67 million adults are expected to be afflicted by 2030. May is National Arthritis Month and experts like registered dietitian Dave Grotto want Americans to take a food-first approach to managing arthritis pain.

In fact, Grotto recommends an “Anti-Arthritis Menu-Plan” in his latest book *101 Optimal Life Foods* (Bantam, 2010). The goal is to help people combat the inflammation associated with arthritis, a “whole body” condition that can contribute to chronic disease and pain. Grotto includes a variety of inflammation-fighting foods, from avocados to soy to ginger. But one of Grotto’s favorite foods to help manage inflammation and arthritis pain is the tart cherry.

“Millions suffering from arthritis rely heavily on over-the-counter medications, when relief may be found in your local grocery store,” said Grotto. “What I love about tart cherries is that they’re backed by an impressive body of science and so easy to add to your diet.”

A study by the International Food Information Council (IFIC) found that 89% of Americans say they use food as “health insurance,” and agree that certain foods have benefits that go beyond basic nutrition and may reduce the risk of disease or other health concerns.<sup>1</sup> Additionally, three out of four consumers said they’d prefer to eat foods with specific health-enhancing properties rather than take supplements; 81% of respondents said they’d add more cherries to their daily diet if they knew the health benefits were virtually equal to dietary supplements or over-the-counter pain medication.<sup>2</sup>

Grotto credits cherries’ year-round availability as dried, frozen and juice, as well as the fruit’s unique sweet-tart taste profile, to the ease of adding them into the daily anti-inflammation diet. He includes cherries in his plan in three easy ways – as a cereal topper for breakfast, a star ingredient in his Cherry Zinger Smoothie and a simple, but powerful, glass of cherry juice.

## Powered by Red: Cherries May Offer Powerful Pain Relief

Known for their bright red color, cherries are particularly rich in anthocyanins – compounds that researchers have linked to reduced inflammation in the body. “It’s no surprise that people have sworn by cherry juice for years for arthritis and gout relief. Science is finally supporting what they’ve known all along,” says Grotto. And the growing body of science is telling. Just one study from the collection, conducted by researchers at Baylor Research Institute in 2007, found that a daily dose of tart cherries (as cherry extract) helped reduce osteoarthritis pain by more than 20 percent for the majority of men and women in a 12-week pilot study.<sup>3</sup>

Cherries’ anti-inflammatory properties can also be beneficial for active adults who are trying to manage the aches and pains of physical activity as they age. The latest science linking cherries to powerful anti-inflammatory benefits shows that drinking tart cherry juice may help runners recover more quickly and effectively from post-race pain.<sup>4</sup>

To help active adults learn to manage pain, the Cherry Marketing Institute teamed up with nutrition experts to create the Red Recovery Routine, which offers pain relief and performance tips on reducing inflammation, staying hydrated and fueling with proper foods like tart cherries before, during and after workouts.

To learn more about cherries anti-inflammatory properties and to download the Red Recovery Routine visit [www.choosecherries.com](http://www.choosecherries.com).

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The Cherry Marketing Institute (CMI) is an organization funded by North American tart cherry growers and processors. CMI’s mission is to increase the demand for tart cherries through promotion, market expansion, product development and research. For more information on the science supporting the unique health benefits of cherries and for cherry recipes and menu ideas, visit [www.choosecherries.com](http://www.choosecherries.com).

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<sup>1</sup> International Food Information Council 2009 Food & Health Survey, May 2009.

<sup>2</sup> Survey of 1,517 adults age 45 and older, conducted by Opinion Research Corporation’s Caravan Services, November 2007, on behalf of the Cherry Marketing Institute.

<sup>3</sup> Cush JJ. Baylor Research Institute, pilot study on tart cherry and osteoarthritis of the knees, 2007.

<sup>4</sup> Kuehl KS, Chestnutt J, Elliot DL, Lilley C. Efficacy of tart cherry juice in reducing muscle pain after strenuous exercise. *Medicine & Science in Sports & Exercise*. 2009;41:507-508 851.