



Cherries
Not just another berry.

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**NEW RESEARCH SHOWS SPECIFIC ANTIOXIDANT, FOUND IN
CHERRIES, MAY BOOST THE BODY'S DEFENSES AGAINST THE FLU**
Study Links Quercetin To Reduced Risk for Respiratory Infection

November 11, 2008 – For those looking for a natural way to stay well this cold and flu season, there's yet another reason to choose cherries, one of today's hottest "Super Fruits." In conjunction with the typical flu vaccine, a new study suggests quercetin, a powerful antioxidant known for its natural anti-viral activity and found in a variety of fruits and vegetables, including tart cherries, may help boost immunity and reduce risk for respiratory infections such as cold and flu. Influenza may affect up to 20 percent of Americans this season, according to Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

In a recent study published in the *American Journal of Physiology-Regulatory, Integrative and Comparative Physiology*, when researchers gave mice the flu virus along with a dose of quercetin, they were better able to fight off respiratory infection, especially when their immune systems were put to the test following a bout of stressful exercise. At the end of the 21 day trial, the quercetin-fed "stressed" mice were 27 percent more likely to be healthy, despite the exposure to the virus.

This study, from the University of South Carolina and Clemson University, supports previous findings that suggest including foods containing quercetin, which is a natural anti-histamine and anti-inflammatory compound, may be a natural way to help boost the immune system and help fight off infection.¹

While onions and apples are the top sources of quercetin in the U.S. diet, gram for gram, cherries are comparable to apples in quercetin levels.^{2,3} Cherries are also high in other powerful

-MORE-

The Cherry Marketing Institute

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antioxidants called anthocyanins, which give them their red color, and that have been linked to other health benefits such as reducing risk factors for heart disease and easing arthritis pain.

With year-round availability as dried, frozen and juice, it's easy to “eat red” and choose cherries as part of the daily diet. For more information on the potential health benefits of cherries, and for “eat red” recipes and tips, visit 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.

¹ Davis, JM, Murphy EA, McClellan JL, Carmichael MD, Gangemi JD. Quercetin reduces susceptibility to influenza infection following stressful exercise. *American Journal of Physiology-Regulatory, Integrative and Comparative Physiology*. 2008;295:R505-509

² Erlund I. Review of the flavonoids quercetin, hesperetin, and naringenin. Dietary sources, bioactives, bioavailability and epidemiology. *Nutrition Research*. 2004;24:851-874.

³ Unpublished data, University of Michigan.