



**Cherries**  
Not just another berry.

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**“SUPER FRUITS” LIKE TART CHERRIES MAY PROVIDE  
ANTI-AGING BENEFITS**

*Science Suggests Cherries Contain Powerful Antioxidant Profile  
That May Protect Against Signs of Aging*

**August 27, 2008**—A growing body of science suggests antioxidant-rich fruits can be a natural way to protect against the signs and conditions of aging.

September is Healthy Aging Month, and experts suggest stocking up on “Super Fruits” such as cherries, which are one of the few known, researched sources of melatonin, a powerful antioxidant that has been shown to play a role in delaying the effects of aging.

A 2007 study conducted at the University of Granada in Spain and published in the journal *Free Radical Research* found that melatonin neutralizes the oxidative and inflammation process caused by aging<sup>1</sup>. In fact, researchers suggest that daily melatonin intake in humans from the age of 30 or 40 on could potentially help delay illnesses related to aging.

Russel J. Reiter, Ph.D, a nutrition researcher at the University of Texas Health Science Center and co-author of the Granada study, recommends eating just a handful of cherries a day to reap the melatonin benefits.

“Studies have shown melatonin can provide many potential health benefits that would be important to people as they age, including helping to protect the vascular system and improving sleep,” said Reiter. “As people look for natural ways to promote longevity, including cherries in their daily diet may be helpful.”

A growing body of evidence also shows cherries may help reduce risk factors of age-related conditions such as inflammation and heart disease. According to registered dietitian Cheryl Forberg, author of *Positively Ageless* (Rodale 2008) and nutritionist for NBC’s “The Biggest Loser,” the antioxidant compounds that make up cherries’ rich red color are the key to their naturally protective benefits.

“Most people don’t know the truth about this powerful fruit,” said Forberg. “But tart cherries have just as many antioxidants as blueberries. As a dietitian, I look first to foods and beverages with health-promoting properties to help people optimize their health.”

### **Aging Boomers Are Harnessing the Stay-Young Power of Foods**

Aging Boomers, who account for nearly one third of the U.S. population, are increasingly turning to foods to help promote their health and longevity. A recent survey conducted by research group Packaged Facts<sup>2</sup> revealed Boomers “particularly demand” products that may help to lower cholesterol and improve heart health – such as cherries.

“Boomers are looking at functional foods as a delicious way to help delay the effects of aging,” said Forberg. “And what’s especially great about cherries is that they’re available year-round as dried, frozen and juice. They’re an easy, convenient and colorful addition to the daily diet, from whipping into a smoothie to mixing into a rice pilaf or folding into a sweet dessert such as gingerbread.” Forberg shares two cherry-infused recipes in her new book – Wild Rice with Radicchio and Dried Cherries and Gingerbread with Dried Cherries and Toasted Pecans.

To learn more about the unique health benefits of cherries, to download a copy of “The Cherry Nutrition Report,” and for Forberg’s cherry recipes, 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).

<sup>1</sup> Rodriguez MI, Carretero M, Escames G, Lopez LC, Maldonado MD, Tan DX, Reiter RJ, Acuna-Castroviejo D. Chronic melatonin treatment prevents age-dependent cardiac mitochondrial dysfunction in senescence-accelerated mice. *Free Radical Research*. 2007;41:15-24.

<sup>2</sup> U.S. Baby Boomer Attitudes and Opportunities: At Home, At Work and On the Road, *Packaged Facts*, June 2008

Cherry Recipes by Cheryl Forberg  
Adapted from *Positively Ageless*

**Wild Rice with Radicchio and Dried Cherries**

**Ingredients:**

1/2 cup dried cherries  
1/2 cup dry red wine  
1 head radicchio (12 ounces), cored and finely chopped  
3 green onions, chopped, with some green tops  
2 cups cooked wild rice  
3/4 cup chopped parsley  
3 tablespoons balsamic vinegar  
1 tablespoon Dijon mustard  
1/4 cup olive oil  
1/2 teaspoon salt  
1/4 teaspoon ground black pepper  
2 tablespoons slivered almonds, lightly toasted  
Parmesan cheese (optional)

**Directions:**

In a small bowl, cover the cherries with the wine and let soak for about 2 hours or overnight. Drain, discarding the wine or reserving for another use.

In a larger bowl, toss the radicchio, onions, rice, parsley and drained cherries.

In a small bowl, whisk together the vinegar, mustard, oil, salt and black pepper. Pour over the radicchio mixture and toss gently. Serve at room temperature, sprinkled with almonds. Add shavings of Parmesan, if desired.

**Nutritional Analysis per Serving:**

147 calories, 3 g protein, 17 g carbohydrates, 7 g total fat, 1 g saturated fat, 2 g monounsaturated fat, 630 mg omega-3's, 3 g fiber, 5 g sugar, 152 mg sodium

## **Gingerbread with Dried Cherries and Toasted Pecans**

### **Ingredients:**

2 cups stone-ground whole wheat flour  
2 tablespoons ground flaxseed  
2 teaspoons baking soda  
¼ teaspoon salt  
2 teaspoons ground ginger  
1 teaspoon ground cinnamon  
¼ teaspoon ground cloves  
1/8 teaspoon ground nutmeg  
1/3 cup olive or canola oil  
2 large omega-3 eggs  
2/3 cup sorghum syrup or unsulfured molasses  
2/3 cup soy or low fat milk  
1 teaspoon pure vanilla extract  
½ cup chopped dried cherries  
¼ cup chopped toasted pecans

### **Directions:**

Preheat the oven to 350° F. Lightly coat an 8"x8" square baking pan with olive oil cooking spray.

In a bowl, measure the flour, flaxseed, baking soda, salt, ginger, cinnamon, cloves and nutmeg. Set aside.

In another bowl, whisk together the oil, eggs, sweetener, milk and vanilla extract. Make a well in the reserved dry ingredients and pour in the liquid mixture. Stir until just combined. Fold in the fruit and nuts.

Pour the batter into the prepared pan. Bake for 10 minutes. Reduce the oven temperature to 325° F and bake for 30 to 35 minutes longer, or until a toothpick used to test doneness come out clean.

### **Nutritional Analysis per Serving:**

176 calories, 4 g protein, 25 g carbohydrates, 7 g total fat, 1 g saturated fat, 5 g monounsaturated fat, 60 mg omega-3's, 4 g fiber, 10 g sugar, 154 mg sodium