

Study Shows This Fruit Can Destroy Leukemia Cells

Whether making your best guacamole recipe or cutting up this pear-shaped fruit for a splash of delicious color in your salad, avocados have so many uses and health benefits.

Rich in antioxidants and Vitamins A, C, E and K, avocados should definitely be part of your regular nutritional intake. A recent study appearing in *Medical News Today* explains how consuming avocados each day as part of a healthy diet can reduce levels of bad cholesterol in the body. Besides the nutritional value of avocados already well cited, scientists have discovered that this delectable fruit has the potential for offering nontoxic healing benefits for those who suffer from acute myeloid leukemia (AML).

Avocatin B Compound Benefits

New scientific findings are perhaps offering a ray of hope for those who suffer from AML. A team of 20 researchers, including Professor Paul A. Spagnuolo from the School of Pharmacy at the University of Waterloo in Ontario, studied the healing benefits of the avocado compound: Avocatin B.

The team released their findings in the journal "Cancer Research," this past April. Spagnuolo explains how avocatin B compounds in avocados destroy AML stem cells. Thus, the compound is a *nutraceutical* or isolated nutrient, which is a component derived from food with the potential for use in a clinical setting to treat one or more health-related conditions.

The study involved the use of a cell-based screen the team used to evaluate avocatin B's effects on leukemia stem cells, and the findings were positive when revealing how the compound not only targets abnormal myoblasts, but also shows that

avocatin B doesn't do any damage to healthy cells. Essentially, avocatin B destroys leukemia stem cells without doing additional harm to the body like other conventional cancer treatments.

About AML

AML is a cancer that affects blood cells in the body. Estimates suggest there are over 20,000 people who receive a diagnosis of AML each year, and over 10,000 people will succumb to the disease. The disorder affects seniors 65 years of age and older the most; the survival rate associated with the disorder is poor: Nearly 80 percent of seniors with the disease will die within five years from the initial diagnosis.

The disease begins in a person's bone marrow where the body produces platelets and red and white blood cells. Red blood cells have the job of transporting oxygen to parts of the body and assist in blood clotting by helping platelets. White blood cells are the body's defense against infection. In a disease like AML, the body creates abnormal myeloblasts consisting of white myeloid blood cells, platelets, or red blood cells (immature cells); The cells are abnormal because, unlike regular cells that stop growing, abnormal myeloblasts do not. Rather than fend off infection, these cells cause overcrowding and become harmful to healthy cells in the body: The condition leads to infections, bleeding and anemia.

Nutraceuticals Versus Extracts

As mentioned previously, nutraceuticals are isolated nutrients studied for potential health and healing benefits. Spagnuolo explains how scientists also study plant extracts for their possible uses in a clinical setting, but that such studies have their limitations. Since extracts are less refined than nutraceuticals, there is a great deal of inconsistency in research findings; extracts can change in potency whenever there are changes in the raw material, whether developmental

or environmental. Conversely, the study of nutraceuticals offers definitive information about what a specific food-derived component can do. The findings associated with nutraceuticals come with a greater consistency and repeatability.

It could be years before the medical field utilizes the compound as a treatment for AML, the team has joined forces with the Commercialization of Regenerative Medicine (CCRM) in Canada, to patent the compound for future use: this measure will allow the compound to transition into the clinical trials phase of research.

Nevertheless, the findings hold future promise, and avocatin B may become a healthy treatment alternative for people with AML.

Don Colbert, M.D New York Times *best-selling author of books such as The Bible Cure Series, What Would Jesus Eat, Deadly Emotions, What You Don't Know May be Killing You, and many more with over 10 million books sold. He is the Medical Director of the Divine Health Wellness Center in Orlando, Florida where he has treated over 50,000 patients.*

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