

Noni Juice

Noni Juice also known as *Morinda Citrifolia* is derived from an edible tropical noni fruit plant used in folk remedies by Polynesians for over 2000 years. It also grows in certain areas in north India. It is commonly assumed to originate in Southeast Asia but research suggests that it originates in the Southwest Pacific. The fruit originates on trees and can vary in coloration from bright yellow to red and is cultivated in sandy and rich volcanic soil at higher altitudes.

The fruit juice has been in high demand for alternative medicinal purposes to treat various common diseases such as cancer, infections, arthritis, diabetes, asthma, hypertension, high blood pressure, muscle aches and pain, menstrual difficulties, headaches, heart disease, AIDS, gastric ulcers, sprains, mental depression, senility, poor digestion, atherosclerosis, blood vessel problems, drug addiction problems, colds and influenza.

Written substantiation of this plant's usage can be documented as early as the 1700's.

Ralph Heinicke, a xeronine system retired biochemist, theorizes that the noni juice contains a natural precursor for xeronine which he renamed Proxeronine. The Proxeronine is converted to the alkaloid xeronine that is the effective ingredient conducive in the cure of many different ailments because it acts as a modifier of deficient molecular structures of proteins whether an enzyme, receptor, or signal transducer and is able to modify the molecular structure of these proteins and so therefore has a wide range of biological activities.

Heinicke hypothesizes that xeronine will interact with the dysfunctional protein and make it fold into its proper conformation, which inevitably results in a properly functioning protein. Therefore, whenever a problem arises in the cell due to a protein structural problem, xeronine's presence is beneficial.

In rebuttal to Heinicke's proxeronine theory McClatchey states that the evidence is outrageous and unreferenced claiming that there is no chemical structure given for the 'alkaloid' xeronine and no clear indication of the scientific research from which they are derived.

This claim and the following are continually used to market noni juice: the claim that noni juice is pharmacologically inactive unless taken on an empty stomach because a proenzyme susceptible to pepsin is needed to convert proxeronine to xeronine; the claim that each body tissue has cells that contain proteins that have receptor sites for xeronine and are responsible for the efficacy of a wide range of plant products; the claim that noni juice is less effective and has unexpected side effects when taken with coffee, nicotine or alcohol; and the claim that green fruit has potentially more valuable components and less desirable flavor than ripe fruit.

Is it legal?

According to the National center for Complementary and Alternative Medicine (NCCAM) an increasing number of individuals are seeking complementary and alternative medicine (CAM) as a means to improve the quality of their lives and well-being and seek relief from chronic, terminal illnesses or side effects of conventional treatments for them.

Several different companies have bottled it and are trying to sell it since the early 1990's as the next cure-all. Although not federally regulated, it is available for human consumption and sales and is generally set up as multilevel marketing. The NCCAM defines CAM practices as those not adopted into conventional medicine. As CAM practices are proven to be safe and effective, they are adopted into mainstream health-care practice.

Is it safe?

Morinda Citrifolia has been in use for about 2000 years by those that live in tropical regions as food and folk medicinal purposes. The bark

leaves and the fruit have been used to heal wounds and extract poisons from the body. Typically, Polynesians would put the fruit in bottles covered with water, loosely covered until the fruit has slightly decomposed and place the jar on a windowsill in the sunlight. After the fruit has slightly decomposed more water is added to it and is drunk a little at a time anywhere from a few tablespoons to a cup daily.

There are no adverse health effects even at high doses. However there have been accusations of herbal hepatotoxicity directly associated with noni juice.

Given that there are known side effects of approved pharmaceuticals people are turning to alternative medicines because they are considered more natural and healthy.

There is very little or lack of knowledge associated with such alternative therapies including side effects and safe dosages. Hepatotoxicity reports are an escalating concern and have serious consequences including death, liver failure and transplants but even this has been refuted by the same journal a mere year later.

Conclusion

Effectiveness of noni juice is in the eye of the beholder. We could be talking about something as simple as what your belief becomes your realization. Is it really the noni juice, or what you believe it can do for you, and so therefore creating your own circumstances?

Noni juice has its advocates and also has its critics. Besides folklore and old wives' tales, there is very little documented evidence that noni juice works. It has a long legacy with the Polynesians for 2000 years, but when you take something out of context from its breeding ground and try to bottle it and make money from it you spoil the effectiveness by commercialization. Noni juice can be effective as preventative measures, but not as a cure.