

Brassica Tea Promises Good Health

The Buzz: *Brassica Tea* serves up a new twist on an already healthy drink. Laced with SGS (sulforaphane glucosinolate), extracted from broccoli, it is sold as a health-promoting beverage. SGS is the precursor to the natural antioxidant sulforaphane, discovered by Johns Hopkins' researcher Paul Talalay, Ph.D. Found in broccoli, as well as in other cruciferous vegetables, SGS boosts the body's own defense system. For broccoli-haters, *Brassica Tea* offers an alternative way to get SGS. Tony Talalay, Dr. Talalay's son and the chief executive officer of Brassica Protection Products, the maker of *Brassica Tea*, says research suggests SGS can fend off cancer and heart disease, possibly destroy the bacteria that cause most stomach ulcers and stomach cancer and may decrease the risk of developing macular degeneration. So, should you put the kettle on for *Brassica Tea*?

The Basics: To produce *Brassica Tea*, SGS is extracted from broccoli and added to black, green or organic red bush tea (an herbal tea from the rooibos plant). Research from China and Johns Hopkins have both shown that women who eat cruciferous vegetables rich in sulforaphane can cut the risk of developing breast cancer by almost half. Moreover, several laboratory studies have found SGS and sulforaphane combat oxidative damage. Each bag of *Brassica Tea* provides 15 milligrams of SGS, the amount found in about three ounces of broccoli or about 1/6 of an ounce of broccoli sprouts, but without a broccoli

taste. SGS is heat stable and water-soluble, so the compound ends up in your tea unchanged.

The Bonus: Drinking tea, black or green, with or without SGS, is a healthy move. All tea from the *Camellia sinensis* plant is rich in naturally occurring phytonutrients called catechins which may help prevent heart disease, boost metabolism and fend off cancer.

The Bust: While population and lab studies have found benefits from eating vegetables rich in sulforaphane, there are no human studies to show that supplementing the diet with its precursor, SGS, will reduce the risk of disease. *Brassica Tea* is more expensive than regular black tea, but priced similarly to some organic, white and green teas.

The Bottom Line: If you're not a cruciferous vegetable lover (and our guess is that there are a lot of you out there), you might want to give *Brassica Tea* a try. While there's no proof that drinking it will provide the same benefits as eating broccoli, you will still be getting the potential health benefits of tea, with SGS as a possible health bonus. There have been no reports of detrimental side effects. It's sold at some Wild Oats and Whole Foods stores, or you can order it online at www.brassicatea.com.



Experts Say Don't Worry About Your Water Intake

Most Americans are doing a pretty good job of staying hydrated simply by letting thirst be their guide. But we're getting too much sodium and too little potassium. Those are the conclusions of a panel of scientists convened by the National Academy of Sciences to issue new dietary recommendations for water, sodium and potassium.

These three nutrients are essential for maintaining normal cell functions. But too much or too little can contribute to health problems, including high blood pressure, heart disease, stroke, kidney stones and bone loss.

Here's what the panel recommends for good health:

Water Recommendations:

- About 91 ounces of total water daily for women; about 125 ounces for men. That includes fluid from all beverages (even caffeinated ones) and foods.
- People who are physically active or live in hot climates need more.
- Drinking fluids at meals and when thirsty in between meals is enough, though thirst is a less reliable indicator as you age.

Sodium Recommendations:

- 1,500 milligrams a day for adults 19 to 50 years old; 1,300 milligrams for adults 50 to 70 years old; 1,200 milligrams for 71 and older.
- Highly active people may need more.
- Aim for no more than 2,300 milligrams a day.
- For people with hypertension who may be sensitive to the blood pressure effects of sodium, a healthy limit may be less.

Potassium Recommendations:

- 4,700 milligrams a day is adequate for adults.
- Potassium is best obtained from natural food sources, such as spinach, cantaloupe, citrus fruits and juices, bananas, potatoes, avocados and kiwifruit.
- No upper limit, but avoid supplements.
- African Americans may especially benefit from more potassium.

Go to <http://books.nap.edu> or call 1-800-642-6242 for the full report.

What You Eat May Affect Hay Fever Symptoms

Spring is in the air....so are pollen and other allergens that cause hay fever sufferers to keep the tissues close at hand. Findings from a new German study suggest there may be a dietary connection as well.

In the two-year study, researchers followed 334 adults with hay fever and 1,336 without. Those with the most trans oleic acid in their diets—a mono-unsaturated fat found mainly in meat, butter, milk and cheese—were nearly three times as likely to have hay fever

compared to those who ate the least. Olive oil is rich in oleic acid, but not in its trans form. Researchers speculate that the trans form of oleic acid may increase oxidative stress on the immune system.

Conversely, other nutrients seemed to offer protection in the study. Hay fever risk decreased as consumption of vitamin E increased, particularly among women. High intakes of the fish oil eicosapentaenoic acid (EPA) appeared to lower risk as well.

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