

Olive leaf

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Olive Leaf (*Olea europaea*) The olive tree is one of oldest cultivated trees. The oil is well known for its flavor and health benefits, but the leaf itself has been used medicinally throughout history. Modern scientific studies have shown that Olive Leaf Extract is one of nature's most potent healers. Natural olive Leaf and olive leaf extracts (OLE), are known as an anti-aging herb that bolsters the immune system by destroying pathogens, bacteria, fungi, and viruses. Olive leaf is also known as an herb for heart health and energy boosting. Recorded use of olive leaf's medicinal use spans back for thousands of years and was used by ancient Egyptian and Mediterranean cultures to treat a variety of health conditions. Olive leaf is the first botanical cited in the Bible (Ezekiel 47:12) as a natural healer: "The fruit thereof shall be for meat, and the leaf thereof for medicine."

Olive leaf extract is derived from the leaves of the olive tree which is a small evergreen tree native to the Mediterranean regions, but is now grown in many other regions throughout the world. The primary medicinal constituent in olive leaf is oleuropein in addition there are several phyto-compounds, flavonoids and powerful natural antioxidants in unprocessed leaf supporting health claims. Both Mission and Manzanillo olive trees are most commonly cited for medical use as other varieties of olive tree are better suited for fruit and olive oil production. Olive leaf extracts are combined with olive oil in soaps and skin creams for topical use.

Olive leaf and extracts are utilized in the complementary and alternative medicine community for its ability to act as a natural pathogens killer by inhibiting the replication process of many pathogens, which by definition include bacteria, viruses, parasites, and fungi. More specifically, it disables infections long enough for the immune system to eliminate them and prevent pathogens from spreading. Unlike synthetic antibiotics, it destroys only the bad bacteria and protects the good without building antibiotic resistance.

Olive leaf is commonly used to fight colds and flu, yeast infections, and viral infections such as the hard-to-treat Epstein-Barr disease, shingles and herpes. Olive leaf is also good for the heart. Olive leaf has shown to reduce low-density lipoproteins (LDL), or bad cholesterol. Researchers have found that olive leaf lowers blood pressure and increase blood flow by relaxing the arteries.

Olive leaf harbors antioxidant properties that help protect the body from the continuous onslaught of free radicals. Free radicals are highly reactive chemical substances that, when oxidized, can cause cellular damage if left unchecked. Some recent research on the olive leaf has shown it's antioxidants to be effective in treating some tumors and cancers such as liver and breast cancer but the research on this is preliminary.

To prepare olive leaf tea place one large teaspoon (approx. 10g) dried olive leaf in a tea ball or herb sack. Drop into two quarts boiling water, immediately reduce heat to a medium simmer and let tea brew in covered pot for three to ten minutes. Stir tea occasionally, strain to drink and/or refrigerate. Tea should be a medium amber color. To combat a specific ailment, sip refrigerated or re-heated tea and consume entire two quarts over a two day period. Olive leaf can also be taken in powder, liquid extract or capsule form.

References