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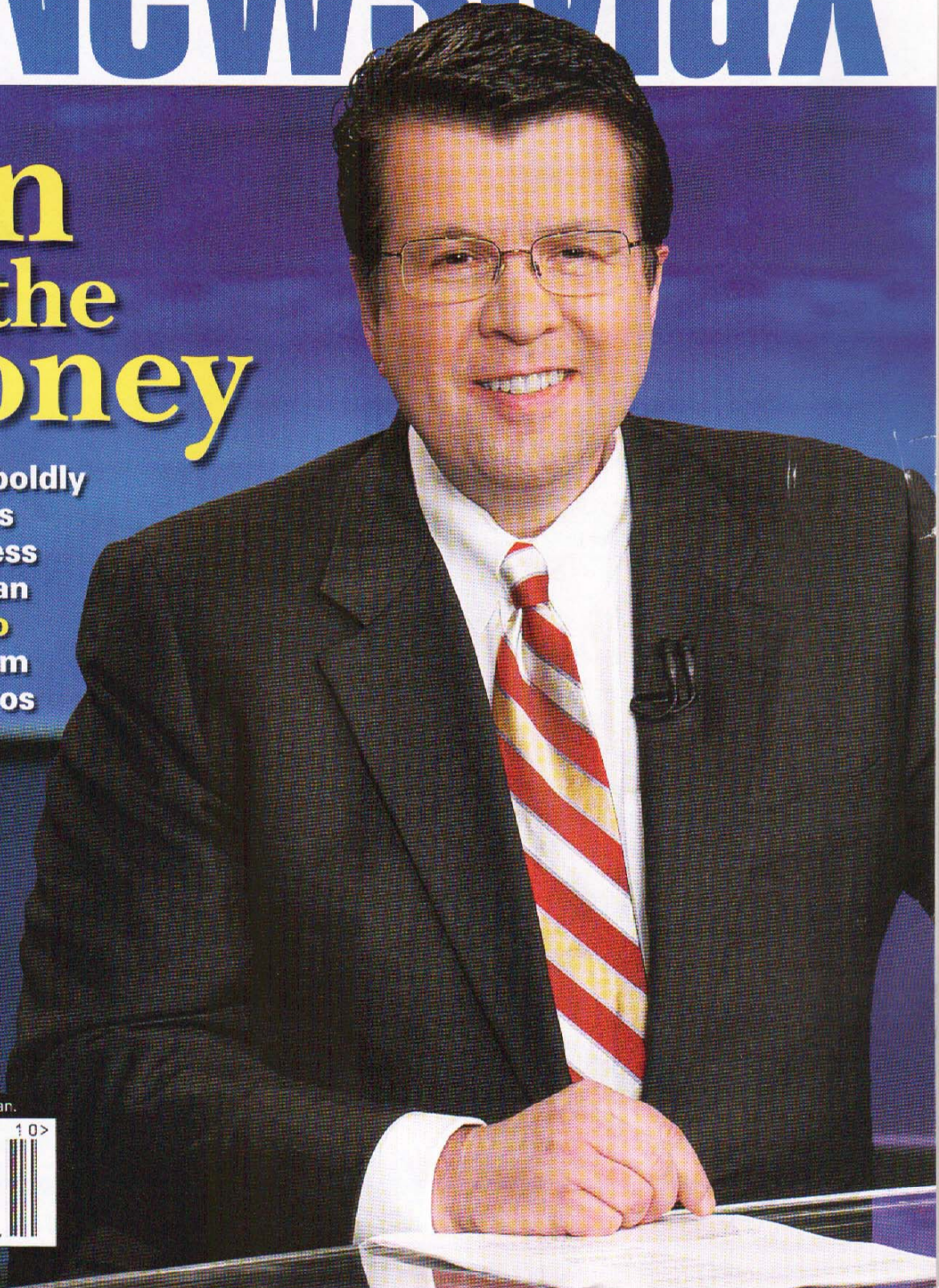
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This Tropical Fruit Is Super Healthy

Mangosteens won't win a beauty contest . . . their appeal lies deep within

By Sylvia Hubbard

A little-known fruit from Southeast Asia called mangosteen may be about to skyrocket into the nutritional Hall of Fame.

Scientists are studying the mysterious, eggplant-colored tropical fruit at a furious pace. The reason: Mangosteen boasts more than four times the antioxidant power of its closest rival, the humble prune. It contains 10 times the antioxidant properties of the much-touted blueberry, and about 20 times more antioxidants than the red grape.

Yet most Americans have never heard of the mangosteen, which is almost impossible to grow outside of tropical regions.

The fruit is rarely found fresh in Western countries, although they are now grown in the tropical regions of both hemispheres.

Mangosteens are illegal to import into the United States without being fumigated



peach or pineapple, although less-flattering comparisons have been made.

In Asia, the Mangosteen is known as the "queen of fruits." For centuries, it has been coveted in the Far East for its medicinal properties.

So why is the buzz now building among researchers and savvy American consumers? Not because it's cheap, that's for sure. A 32-oz. bottle of mangosteen juice can set you back \$25 to \$38. Yet proponents herald this unassuming fruit as a cure for everything from athlete's foot to Alzheimer's.

Carla Anderson from Woodbury, Minn., suffered from chronic rheuma-

because of the fear they may shelter the Asian fruit fly. Americans usually get imported mangosteen in the form of juice, freeze-dried fruit, and nutritional supplements.

The purplish fruit certainly won't win any beauty contests. It's the size of an apple and has a hard, leathery rind covering five to seven segments. The flavor of its pulp is often compared to a



THE JUICE TO CURE WHAT AILS YOU

Mangosteen has been used for centuries to treat various ailments. Its proponents claim success in treating a host of human conditions:

- **Heart problems.** Xanthones neutralize the free radicals that many researchers believe cause the inflammation at the root of cardiovascular disease. Mangosteen is credited with lowering LDL cholesterol, reducing high blood pressure, strengthening blood vessels, and helping prevent arteriosclerosis.

- **Digestion problems.** Xanthones kill fungi, parasites, and the H-pylori bacteria associated with ulcers. The fruit's antioxidants help protect against gastroesophageal reflux disease (GERD), and contribute to the treatment of irritable bowel syndrome (IBS), diarrhea, Crohn's disease, diverticulitis, and ulcers.

- **Lung problems.** Mangosteen's nutrients supposedly reduce lung infections, tuberculosis, and asthma. It also allegedly works as a decongestant.

- **Diseases.** The list includes cancer, diabetes, Alzheimer's, cystic fibrosis (CF), ankylosing spondylitis (AS), lupus, myasthenia gravis, fibromyalgia, and Parkinson's.

- **Common ailments.** Mangosteen's juice has been used to treat topical wounds, the itching and scaling of neurodermatitis, hemorrhoids, cystitis, constipation, PMS, and it may provide relief from the pain of osteoporosis and even carpal tunnel syndrome.

It would seem the homely mangosteen is being touted as the latest miracle cure-all. But consumers beware — medical science has yet to substantiate most of these claims, as more research is necessary.

— S.H.



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toid arthritis and its accompanying conditions for 22 years. She took medications, including prednisone, methotexate, hormone replacement therapy, and antidepressants before discovering mangosteen. "These are the prescriptions I no longer need to take thanks to mangosteen juice," she says.

Kate Newbery, a Chicago publicist, is convinced mangosteen helped her avoid contracting the flu when it swept through her office last winter. "I hadn't had a flu shot, so I began looking for something to boost my immune system. I read some literature on mangosteen, and I began taking one ounce each day as a supplement," she tells NewsMax. "I was the only one in my office who didn't get the flu."

Indeed, the fruit has some unique properties. Like other fruits, mangosteen is rich in vitamins and minerals.

That alone doesn't explain its apparent success in healing, but perhaps the ORAC (oxygen radical absorbance capacity) test helps. This lab test measures the power of antioxidants, which are found in fruits and vegetables and help fight aging and keep the body healthy. One study found that mangosteen had an ORAC rating of 24,000 per 100 grams. Prunes came in a distant second with 5,770 ORAC units.

Still, Ralph Moss, Ph.D., a leading writer on alternative medicine, gives a word of caution: "It must be pointed out that merely having an astronomically high ORAC value does not in and of itself confer any particular advantage. Human beings can absorb not all antioxidants that are confirmed as present in the laboratory."

Moss' worries aside, studies have shown that the polyphenols found in mangosteen pack a powerful punch containing 500 percent more antioxidant power than vitamin C.

Mangosteen also provides a heaping helping of catechins, which research

shows fight free radicals, neutralizing them before they have a chance to harm the body. In addition, the fruit contains over 20 different types of xanthenes, which are powerful antioxidants.

"Xanthenes and xanthone derivatives have been shown to have beneficial effects on some cardiovascular diseases, including ischemic heart disease, atherosclerosis, hypertension and thrombosis," Ray Sahelian, M.D., tells NewsMax. "The protective effects of xanthenes in the cardiovascular system may be due to their antioxidant and anti-inflammatory effects. Xanthenes may also have anti-tumor activity."

All parts of the mangosteen are used for medicinal purposes.

The purple rind, also known as the pericarp, looks tough but is actually soft.

The pulp contains the cream-colored, juicy fruit divided in segments, much like a tangerine.

The mangosteen seeds contain healthy amounts of the beneficial xanthenes.

Mangosteen is sold as a water or alcohol-based extract, fruit puree, juice concentrate, or capsule.

Fruit puree is obtained by crushing whole mangosteens, then adding water to the mixture. Other fruit juices are also often added to improve the taste.

Proponents of mangosteen claim that many studies conducted on animals and human cell lines back up the fruit's almost miraculous reputation as a healer, although no studies have actually been done on humans.

One study showed mangosteen had "strong inhibitory effects" on the bacteria that causes acne and another showed a strong anti-tuberculosis effect.

Two other studies showed promise in the fight against cancer. One showed an ability to stop the proliferation of breast cancer cells, including inducing apoptosis (cell suicide).

The other study showed it was effective against human leukemia, due to the fruit's ability to induce proper disposal of defunct cells.

ASIA'S QUEEN OF FRUITS ENJOYS A MIRACULOUS REPUTATION



TOP ANTIOXIDANT FOODS

Two labs analyzed mangosteen and rated its antioxidant power, as measured by oxygen radical absorbance capacity (ORAC), at between 17,000 and 24,000. Here's how other fruits and vegetables compare. The larger the number, the better.

FRUITS

| | |
|--------------|-------|
| Prunes | 5,770 |
| Pomegranates | 3,037 |
| Raisins | 2,830 |
| Blueberries | 2,400 |
| Blackberries | 2,036 |
| Strawberries | 1,540 |
| Raspberries | 1,220 |
| Plums | 949 |
| Oranges | 750 |
| Red grapes | 739 |
| Cherries | 670 |



VEGETABLES

| | |
|------------------|-------|
| Kale | 1,770 |
| Spinach | 1,260 |
| Brussels sprouts | 980 |
| Alfalfa sprouts | 930 |
| Broccoli florets | 890 |
| Beets | 840 |
| Red bell peppers | 710 |
| Onions | 450 |
| Corn | 400 |
| Eggplant | 390 |



ORAC rating per 100 grams

Source: Jean Mayer USDA Human Nutrition Research Center on Aging, Tufts University

Still, the lack of human trials bothers many experts, including Dr. Moss. "Although mangosteen's xanthenes have been known for almost 150 years, there are still only 19 PubMed [online medical publications] articles on these xanthenes and none concerning the use of xanthenes in the actual clinical treatment of human disease," he says.

"Some of the in vitro studies regarding mangosteen's anti-cancer potential are intriguing and worthwhile to explore," Dr. Sahelian says. "Still, it's worrisome that we don't have any human studies, and until they are done, it is difficult to know for certain what role mangosteen juice or mangosteen supplement extracts play in health and disease." □