

Olive Leaf – an amazing volatile herb

You are here: [Vitamin Lady At Middle Earth®](#) > [Article Archive](#) > Olive Leaf – an amazing volatile herb



OLIVE LEAF EXTRACT: the New /Old Antimicrobial

by Lynn Hinderliter CN, LDN

I imagine many of you have recently come across the term “Supergerms”, referring to bacteria and viruses that have become immune to any antibiotics that can be thrown at them, having mutated beyond their control. Scientists have long been aware that this is a growing problem: any time a condition is treated with antibiotics, surviving “invaders” can mutate to the point where they are no longer affected by the original medication. Stronger and stronger antibiotics then have to be used, resulting in ever more dangerous mutations. Olive Leaf

There are some studies that suggest the high usage of antibiotics in animal feeds, and therefore in our food supply, has also had a part to play in this scenario. Olive Leaf

In the Western World, we seem to be experiencing an uncomfortable increase in the number of viral and bacterial problems that are proving extremely difficult to control – AIDs, Epstein-Barr, Chronic Fatigue, MS, Yeast infections, Lyme’s disease, and many parasitic invasions as well. Olive Leaf

In 1999, Dr. Abigail Salyers of the University of Illinois presented a paper at the 6th Annual Midwest Microbial Pathogenesis Meeting in which she showed that currently **80% of the bacteria in the human colon are genetically predisposed to become antibiotic resistant, compared to 33%** only thirty years ago. Olive Leaf

A new problem is surfacing now, where antibiotic resistance is being promoted by high levels of pharmaceutical drugs in our water supply (See RESOURCES at bottom). A program I heard on NPR recently quoted one expert as estimating that 3 BILLION prescriptions were filled in the US alone last year. One can certainly imagine where what the patient doesn’t absorb all ends up! Olive Leaf

What to do? Researchers are finding that the plant world is a rich potential source of plant based remedies (also known as phytopharmaceuticals), and that since these herbal remedies are more biologically complex in their actions, it is harder for the enemy germs to mutate and avoid them. Olive Leaf

We are familiar with the healing roles of Goldenseal, Grapefruit Seed Extract, Echinacea, Tea Tree Oil, Myrrh, Garlic and more. However, none of them match the credentials of Olive Leaf Extract.

Some of the first research into this substance goes back to the 1800s, when it was used as an anti-malarial. In fact, it was generally acknowledged to be superior to Quinine for this, but since Quinine was easier to administer it became the treatment of choice. Olive Leaf

In the 1960s, the active ingredient in Olive Leaves was identified, and some exciting results began to emerge, above and beyond its antimicrobial and anti viral properties. It seemed as though Olive had an effect on heart function in that it relaxed the arteries – very helpful in cases of hypertension. It also increased blood flow to the coronary arteries, relieved arrhythmias, and inhibited the oxidation of low density lipo-proteins. This was just icing on the cake, however, compared to the electrifying results experienced with conditions resulting from any virus, retrovirus, bacterium or protozoan! Olive Leaf

A list of such conditions would include influenza, tuberculosis, urinary tract infections, meningitis, as well as the serious diseases mentioned in the first paragraph above. Dr. Walker Morton D.P.M. claims “ There is no better anti-protozoa remedy: it even chases out worms. And if someone suffers with chronic fatigue syndrome, the yeast syndrome, fibromyalgia, psoriasis or heart disease, olive leaf extract should be part of that person’s armamentarium.” Olive Leaf

I have also had anecdotal reports of the higher potency standardized Olive Leaf extracts helping fight Lyme Disease.

In the same book I quote from above, Dr. Morton talks about the anti-fungal properties of Olive leaf. He points out that most anti-fungal drugs inhibit the growth of fungus, but do not eliminate it. This gives the surviving cells a chance to mutate and become resistant to the drug. Olive leaf, on the other hand, is fungicidal which translates to less possibility of mutations and also less risk of re-infection. It also supports the immune system, an important defense against such infections.

One thing health professionals make their patients aware of, is that if they have a very heavy viral load, or are very sick, they may experience a Herxheimer Reaction, this is a temporary worsening of their condition as the “die-off effect” takes hold. This is where the body experiences reactions to rapid unloading of toxins into their system which can lead to a short-term flu like feeling: if this happens, it is wise to cut back on the amount of the extract being used, or even to stop using it for a couple of days until the body adjusts. Apart from this, however, there have been no observed or reported side effects. In a sense, this is a measure of how effective the substance is! Olive Leaf

While I am intrigued by the benefits of Olive Leaf Extract for the heart, and possibly its application in diabetes, and for long-term health problems like Chronic Fatigue, I think what I find very valuable here is that we finally have an effective response to short term attacks, such as bladder infections, colds and flu, ear infections, and things of that nature.

This is an area in which until now herbal medicine has, in my experience, fallen a little short of a truly successful answer. I feel very pleased to have a new and powerful weapon in my arsenal as a defense against both free and cell-associated viruses. Save Olive Leaf for really serious situations, however! One does not want to run the risk of not having it available and effective by using it daily, and perhaps having the body habituated to its actions!

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