

# Drink Your Juice to Prevent Alzheimer's Disease

**By Kimberly Beauchamp, ND**

Healthnotes Newswire (November 2, 2006)—Can drinking more juice really help prevent Alzheimer's disease? Apparently so, says a study released in the *American Journal of Medicine*.

People who eat more fruits and vegetables have lower rates of many diseases—cancer, heart disease, and diabetes—to name just a few. In a landmark trial, researchers have found yet another reason to add some more of these foods to your diet: people who drink at least three glasses of fruit or vegetable juice each week may have a 76% lower chance of suffering from Alzheimer's disease.

Alzheimer's disease is a brain disorder that occurs in the later years of life. People with Alzheimer's develop progressive memory loss and gradually lose the ability to function and to take care of themselves. As more people are living longer, the number of people with Alzheimer's disease will continue to grow.

No one knows for sure what causes Alzheimer's disease, but free radical production in the brain seems to be involved. Antioxidants—substances that can neutralize free radicals—have been investigated as anti-Alzheimer's agents.

Recent research points to antioxidants called polyphenols—abundant in apples, grapes, and citrus fruits—as powerful brain protectors. The new study looked at the eating habits of 1,836 Japanese Americans to determine if drinking fruit and vegetable juices that are high in polyphenols might decrease their risk of Alzheimer's disease.

People who drank three or more glasses of fruit or vegetable juice each week were far less likely to be diagnosed with Alzheimer's disease than were people who drank less than one glass. Those people at highest risk for the disease tended to get the most protection from drinking juice.

The study's authors commented, "Fruit and vegetable juices may also possess other protective components [other than polyphenols],

such as folate and minerals. A high [blood] level of folate was found to be associated with a decreased risk of Alzheimer's disease."

It's not yet known which types of juice offer the most protection, or for how long they must be drunk to see an effect. For now, adding a few glasses of apple or orange juice to your diet each week could be a simple way to reduce your risk of Alzheimer's disease.

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