

Industry News - Recent Press Releases

Health Canada Approves Several Health Claims for Tea

Toronto, May 29, 2007 – Health Canada’s Natural Health Products Directorate (NHPD) has deemed tea to be a natural health product and has officially recognized tea for its role in maintaining good health.

After a period of extensive review, the NHPD has approved three health claims for tea. All types of tea infusions (black, green and oolong) are recognized as a source of antioxidants for the maintenance of good health. Tea is approved for increasing alertness. And tea is further accredited as helping to maintain and/or support cardiovascular health.

Green Tea extract is approved as a source of antioxidants for the maintenance of good health. It is also approved for use as an adjunct treatment in a weight management program in combination with a healthy diet and regular exercise.

“This is great news for tea and the millions of Canadians who enjoy tea,” says Louise Roberge, President of the Tea Association of Canada. “The approved health claims will help educate consumers about the health benefits of drinking tea.”

The NHPD’s ruling will enable tea manufactures to include the approved health claims on product packaging and will set stage for allowing the use of the accepted health claims in marketing tea. “Canadians are concerned about maintaining their health and are looking for products that genuinely will benefit them,” says Roberge. “Now with these accepted health claims, Canadian consumers will know that tea is officially a healthy beverage choice.”

The scientific evidence about the numerous health benefits of tea has been mounting for nearly two decades. Hundreds of research studies have found many potential health attributes associated with tea including protection from cardiovascular disease and cancer. Tea is second only to water as the healthiest beverage choice according to guidelines for healthy beverage consumption that were developed by a panel of American nutrition experts and published in the March 2006 issue of the *Journal of American Clinical Nutrition*.

“Tea is rich in naturally occurring flavonoids which act as antioxidants” says Dr. Carol Greenwood, Professor of Nutritional Sciences at the University of Toronto. “In fact, tea is one of the highest sources of antioxidants in the diet.” Antioxidants are compounds that neutralize the body’s naturally occurring but cell-damaging free radical molecules. Damage by free radicals over time is believed to contribute to the development of many chronic disease including cancer and cardiovascular disease, explains Greenwood.

Part of the Health Products and Food Branch of Health Canada, the NHPD is the regulating authority for natural health products sold in Canada. It ensures that Canadians have ready access to natural health products that are safe, effective and of high quality. Natural health products include herbal remedies, homeopathic medicines, vitamins, minerals, traditional medicines, probiotics, amino acids and essential fatty acids.

Tea in Canada

Tea is the world’s second most popular beverage after water. In 2006, the tea market in Canada was worth approximately \$319 million. Canadians drink more than seven billion cups of tea each year. In 2005, the per capita consumption of tea in Canada was 69.98 litres (280 cups) per Canadian, an increase of 43 percent from 1996 when it was 48.9 litres.

Source: http://tea.ca/Page.asp?PageID=122&ContentID=847&SiteNodeID=175&BL_ExpandID=

