

*ELDERBERRY, A FLU VIRUS'S WORST NIGHTMARE

By Mike King

Written reports about Elderberry and its medicinal use go back as far as 5000 BC when ancient Egyptians first discovered that applying Elderberry flowers to the skin improved the complexion and healed burns. Elderberry or Elder is the genus *Sambucus* of about 30 species of shrubs and small trees found in Temperate to Tropical regions of both the Northern and Southern Hemispheres. This member of the honeysuckle family lives up to 100 years. The name *Sambucus* is found in the ancient writings of Pliny and other ancient writers and comes from the Greek word *Sambuca*, an ancient musical Panpipe or flute widely used by the Romans. In 400 BC Hippocrates recognized the healing power of the Elderberry's flowers and fruit. Native American Indian tribes made elderberry tea for preventing colds and relieving toothaches. Folklore and tradition abounds with the Elderberry. Elderberry was even used as a symbol of grief in Shakespeare's *Cymbeline*. It has been said that Judas hung himself on an Elderberry tree. There is even a mushroom that grows on dead Elder wood called "Judas' ear". During Medieval times the Elderberry was thought to be magical and having a tree on one's property would even bring good luck. During this time, Elderberry was considered a Holy Tree, capable of restoring good health, keeping good health and as an aid to longevity. The British in the 17th century often drank Elderberry wine believing it to help "prolong life and cure the common cold."

The berries have very few calories and lots of nutrition. They provide large amounts of Vitamin A (beta-carotene), B vitamins, Vitamin C (only rose hips and currants are higher), Calcium, Potassium, Phosphorous, Anthocyanin's (immune response boosters) fruit sugars, amino acids, flavonoids, tannins, proteins, plus many other powerful active healing compounds. According to Earl Mindell's *Herb Bible*, a book about herbs and their traditional uses, Gypsies used the berry from the black elder tree (*Sambucus Canadensis nigra*) as a popular remedy for colds and the flu. Drunk as a hot tea, it promoted sweating and helped to sooth upper respiratory infections. According to C.J. Puotinen, author of *Herbs to help you Breath Freely*, Elderberry flowers from the black Elder tree contain tannins that have been shown to help dry up excess mucus, and the leaves even have expectorant properties.

People eat Elderberries to lose weight due to their diuretic and detoxifying properties. In September 2007, a 12-week trial by Dr. Paul Kroon at the Institute of Food Research will begin to study the positive skin healing effects of the Elderberry's anthocyanins, compounds that give the berries their vibrant color. The bioflavonoids in Elderberries promote circulation and strengthen the capillaries. Herbalists for centuries have recommend Elderberries as an astringent and diaphoretic - good for colds, excessive mucus, sore throat and coughs. Elderberries make a great black hair dye, which was known to be widely used by the Romans. In 1899, an American sailor accidentally discovered that Elderberries even help to relive arthritis. Other countless folk medicine stories report relief from many ailments including constipation, colic, diarrhea, rheumatism, flu, sinus infection, fever, irritated eyes and gas.

In comes modern science... The historical claims made concerning Elderberry in folk medicine were finally researched in 1983 by Dr. Madeleine Mumcuoglu, PhD, (in virology) at Hadassah-Hebrew University Medical Center at Ein Karem in Israel. A careful study was made of the proteins and active elements contained in the fruit of the black Elderberry (*Sambucus nigra.*) and two active principle ingredients were tested against the influenza virus. The tests revealed that these two active ingredients effectively combated the flu virus. This led to her development of Sambucol, a proprietary black Elderberry based extract with about 150 known constituents.

There are now numerous published studies proving the efficacy of the Elderberry and Elderberry extracts in combating viruses. As early as 1995 a placebo controlled study of 40 patients diagnosed with influenza published in the *Journal of Alternative and Complementary Medicine* found 90 percent of flu patients who had taken 10ml of Elderberry extract four times a day were completely symptom free after three days. In September of 2001, at the Kimron Veterinary Institute Sambucol was shown to neutralize the West Nile virus in-vitro. Another study published in the *Journal of Internal Medical Research* in December of 2003 conducted through the University of Oslo School of Medicine, Norway, shortened the duration of flu types A & B by half. In January of 2006, at a press conference in the Royal Society of Medicine in London England, Sambucol was found to fight the avian Flu virus H5N1. In fact, the team at Rotoscreen Virology, an institute associated with the University of London, said that the extract was at least 99% effective against the dreaded H5N1 virus and significantly neutralized the infectivity of the virus. An in vitro study has also shown Sambucol to be effective in increasing the production of four inflammatory cytokines suggesting that the supplement may have an immuno-stimulatory effect and therefore may be worth taking year round to prevent flu and other viral diseases.

But that's not all... In October of 2007, New Chapter, an innovative Nutraceutical company, introduced Blockade. This product incorporated the latest in scientific research and technology. Using supercritical CO2 extraction, which potentiates botanicals up to 250 times and retains all the active ingredients, the black Elderberry extract Blockade now contains over 1,000 identified constituents. Adding the unique DART(Direct Analysis Real Time) equipment each dose of Blockade is verified to ensure a perfect virus blocking chemical profile. Finally, the complete antiviral constituents that were missing in earlier Elderberry extracts, have been preserved, potentiated and standardized.

The powerful bioactives in Blockade seek out viruses, bind to them, and create a coating around them. This protein-based coating creates a barrier around the virus so that it is totally unable to attach to and enter cells thus stopping any viral replication. In-vitro laboratory studies of the patent pending Blockade have demonstrated up to a 100% success rate in inhibiting entry of enveloped viruses like influenza. Other early reports have indicated that blockade is effective against many other enveloped viruses including all types of herpes, HIV, intestinal viruses, cold viruses and even Dengue fever. Other possibilities would be for Lyme disease and other cyst forming spirochete bacteria and infections.

Blockade is available in a pleasant tasting blueberry lozenge form and rapidly dissolves in the mouth providing relief within minutes not hours. According to Dr. Randy Alberte of HerbalScience, developer of the active Virabloc component of Blockade, "the side effects of eating or taking Blockade will be very similar to the effect of eating a blueberry pie. There will in fact only be side benefits." Dr. Alberte further states that once blocked the viruses need to move quickly to avoid our immune system or die. It seems logical that if further enhancement of the immune system is administered via natural immune system boosters and synergists such as Oregano, Neem, Echinacea, Vitamin C, Zinc and the like the virus will die even more rapidly, yet leave our own immune system enhanced due to the encounter. Interestingly, Sambucol already has added

Echinacea, Vitamin C and Zinc in its formula. New Chapter also has a Supercritical Oregano Extract that is extremely potent and effective in fighting all infections. Elderberries are no longer just for wine, jellies, jams, preserves, chutney, ketchups, flavorings, syrups, candy, pies, and sauces, they may also be our best main defense against all envelope viruses and similar diseases!

**This information is for educational purposes only and is not intended to diagnose, treat, cure, or prevent any disease.*