



The 'Age of **Aquarius**' Replaced by the 'Age of the *Antioxidant*'

Antioxidants have attained "resonance" with consumers, meaning that consumers respond to the term and make decisions based on whether or not the word "antioxidant" is part of the equation.

The recent uptick in antioxidant use has occurred predominantly in the past year. In the U.S. alone, there were 262 products in 2008 that included antioxidant content on the label. This was a two-fold increase over the number of antioxidant products in the year prior, and it dwarfed the 106 antioxidant product launches in 2006.

Market surveys claim that more than half of consumers may buy or stay with a product if it has an antioxidant value.

What's all the fuss about? Antioxidants have one thing going for them that everyone wants: protection against free radicals. It's this potentially cancer-saving characteristic that has so many people talking.

The free radical protection is right in the antioxidant name

Free radicals are produced by oxidation reactions in the body, and once the oxidation reactions occur that create the free radicals, the free radicals then begin a chain reaction of their own, which causes damage to cells and marks the onset of cancer. Antioxidants intervene both at the oxidation reaction step and during the free radical chain reactions in order to prevent each from happening.

There are a number of different types of nutrients and minerals that provide antioxidant relief. Some of the most popular include polyphenols, flavonoids, beta-carotene, and vitamins C and E. Polyphenols, in particular, have received much publicity lately because they have been linked to being most responsible for the health benefits from antioxidants.

In theory, antioxidants appear to be world beaters. In actuality, research on them has been less conclusive. Researchers cannot agree on just how powerful or just how overrated antioxidants really are.

When antioxidants first hit the scene, the praise was near universal. A number of studies found that increasing antioxidants in the diet could reduce cancers, in some cases by as much as one-third.

But as the praise came rolling in, so too did the criticism. Some researchers found results contrary to the ones that showed antioxidants having health benefits.

The issue, it seemed, was in the type of antioxidant involved. Most of the promising antioxidant research that touted the strength of antioxidants was done on natural sources. It now appears that inconclusive studies focused on the lesser potent synthetic antioxidant sources.

If this distinction holds true, then AIM products – as natural as they come – are in good hands, and AIM Members stand to benefit.

Already with a product lineup filled with heavy antioxidant hitters, the newest AIM product, AIM CellStar[®] juice, specializes in providing antioxidant health in both the immune-boosting Mango

Tango and the age-defying Pomagrape. And the best part is that CellStar, along with every other AIM product, gets its antioxidant abilities naturally.

One of the highest sources of natural antioxidants is the pomegranate

Studies have found that it is more potent than other, more popular fruit juices (apple juice, for one), and that it has a noticeable increase on the antioxidant levels of the blood.

Pomegranate is found in both the Pomegrape and Mango Tango varieties of CellStar, and it is just one of many fruit juices featuring potent antioxidant capabilities found in CellStar.

The Mango Tango immune-boosting juice counts mangoes, raspberries, and mangoes in its concentrated blend. Pomegrape, in addition to the potent pomegranate and grape seed extracts of its title, receives anti-aging benefits from the antioxidants in blueberries and black currants.

CellStar is one of AIM's most powerful antioxidant products, but it's not quite the best. That distinction falls to AIM LeafGreens®.

As a blend of the leaves of four different nutritious plants, LeafGreens™ has a lot going for it. Among those four plants, spinach has some of the strongest antioxidant power of any vegetable, and along with barley, faba bean, and field pea, it helps make LeafGreens™ a strong antioxidant option.

In addition to CellStar and LeafGreens™, a noted antioxidant regular in the AIM product line is AIM Proancynol® 2000.

Two of its main ingredients – green tea and grape seed – are loaded with polyphenols and proanthocyanidins, two types of antioxidants.

The green tea polyphenols include a catechin called epigallocatechin gallate (EGCG), one of the best resources for neutralizing free radicals. In a research study, EGCG was found to be 100 times more effective than vitamin C at reducing the spread of free radicals.

Grape seed extract, too, has a powerful antioxidant helper, oligomeric proanthocyanidin or OPC. These antioxidants are stronger than vitamins C and E, and they are naturally abundant in traditional grape seed sources.

The awesome AIM power of antioxidants sounds like a winner, but it is hard to uniformly advertise its health benefits since a uniform antioxidant measurement does not exist. There are tools out there that can measure antioxidant capacity of foods and nutritional supplements; the problem is that the regulatory committees have yet to decide upon which one is best.

However, one of the most common tests is Oxygen Radical Absorbance Capacity (ORAC), and it is referred to as the “standard bearer” of antioxidant measurements by medical communities. Like other antioxidant tests, ORAC is used to measure the extent of a chemical reaction between antioxidants and free radicals. One of the hurdles in coming up with a consensus on testing is that there are simply so many possible free radicals to test. ORAC looks at free radicals that appear most often in the body and that test has become the accepted standard for measuring antioxidants. One result of all this antioxidant emphasis is that products worldwide have started featuring the ORAC amount on the label.

And CellStar is no exception.

It's easy to list the number when it's something to be proud of. CellStar provides 1,250 ORAC per two-ounce serving, which is enough to place it among the leaders in antioxidant juices. Similar products in the AIM product line also rank high on the ORAC scale with LeafGreen's 1,662 being the most notable. No matter how you measure it, there's no denying that antioxidants provide a boost of health for those who need it. Keeping on the path of natural antioxidant sources and maintaining a balance of several fruits and vegetables have been proven to make a difference where it matters most: in your health.

The age of the antioxidant is here, and for AIM's healthful demographic, that is a very good thing.

