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From "Mean Girls" to
Machine Guns



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“Don’t Throw That Out...It’s Good For You”

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Most of us don't like to eat the white casing part of oranges and want to purchase seedless grapes so that we don't have to deal with the "garbage" parts of our foods. However, we are learning more and more that these "garbage" parts of our foods may have significant health benefits. As the adage goes, "one man's garbage is another's treasure"...and it appears that what we have all deemed to be garbage in the past, is now seemingly some of the most nutritious parts of what we could be consuming.

As research delves deeper into nutrition and alternative methods of health maintenance and disease treatment, we are now fortunately much more aware of what is beneficial to our health and what is not. For example, too much of synthetic vitamins can harm us versus too little of certain natural forms of nutrients can significantly debilitate our body's natural ability to heal and function optimally.

With the ever increasing research efforts about nutrition, we are now seeing that pectin may have anti-cancer properties, grape seeds may have high antioxidant activity, and grapes in their entirety may help us with weight loss. So, what are the main take-away points from all of the abundant, albeit sometimes confusing, research findings?

We may not like the taste of all the parts of our foods, but if it came naturally from Mother Nature and it is safely edible, you may want to think twice about cutting it off and throwing it away. When there are any doubts, you should of course ask your registered dietitian and your physician, but I am consistently recommending to my patients to eat the pectin encasing the orange and encouraging my patients to chew and eat the grape seeds along with the grape.

Instead of buying pectin and grape or resveratrol supplements, we may want to first start by getting these from plant-sources. Rarely, too high dosages of green tea supplements may lead to elevated liver function test levels, but drinking green tea in its natural form is significantly safer (even at higher intake levels). In other words, foods in its natural form tend to have less risk for adverse events. So, what should we keep in mind the next time we are grocery shopping for supplements and foods?

Give Mother Nature's plants a try first and if you need to use nutraceuticals to supplement your nutrient intake, use it as an adjunctive therapy to an otherwise healthy balanced plant-based diet...because no amount of nutraceutical supplements can make up for a poor diet.

When you eat a well-balanced plant-based anti-inflammatory diet and use supplements as adjunctive gap-fillers to create an optimized nutrient-rich environment, not only will your physiological functioning improve but your skin and weight will similarly be optimized as well.