

URINARY TRACT INFECTIONS AND CRANBERRY JUICE

Thomas F. Stringer, M.D.

Many urologists have long proposed that cranberry juice can play a role in the prevention of urinary tract infections. The mechanism, however, was unknown until an article in the New England Journal of Medicine. The report states that cranberries and blueberries contain condensed tannins that prevent infection-causing bacteria from attaching to the lining of the urinary bladder. Tannins prevent infections from developing rather than killing bacteria as antibiotics would. The development of an acidic urine does not play a role in the prevention of infections.

Therefore, for women with recurrent UTIs, a daily 10 oz. glass of cranberry juice may provide a safe, preventive approach to avoiding urinary tract infections.

May 2004