

herbs at a glance

Noni



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This fact sheet provides basic information about noni—common names, what the science says, potential side effects and cautions, and resources for more information.

Common Names—noni, morinda, Indian mulberry, hog apple, canary wood

Latin Name—*Morinda citrifolia*

Noni is an evergreen shrub or small tree that grows throughout the tropical regions of the Pacific Ocean, from Southeast Asia to Australia. Noni has a history of use as a topical preparation for joint pain and skin conditions. Today, noni fruit juice has folk uses as a general health tonic and for cancer and chronic conditions such as cardiovascular disease and diabetes.

The noni fruit is most commonly combined with other fruits (such as grape) to make juice. Preparations of the fruit and leaves are also available in capsules, tablets, and teas.

What the Science Says

- In laboratory research, noni has shown antioxidant, immune-stimulating, and tumor-fighting properties. These results suggest that noni may warrant further study for conditions such as cancer and cardiovascular disease. However, noni has not been well studied in people for any health condition.
- NCCAM-funded research includes a study on noni for cancer to determine its safety and potential effects on tumors and symptoms, as well as a laboratory study of noni's effects on prostate cancer cells. The National Cancer Institute is funding preliminary research on noni for breast cancer prevention and treatment.

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Side Effects and Cautions

- Noni is high in potassium. People who are on potassium-restricted diets because of kidney problems should avoid using noni.
- Several noni juice manufacturers have received warnings from the U.S. Food and Drug Administration about making unsupported health claims.
- Few side effects from noni have been reported, but its safety has not been adequately studied.
- There have been reports of liver damage from using noni. It should be avoided if you have liver disease because it contains compounds that may make your disease worse.
- Tell all your health care providers about any complementary health practices you use. Give them a full picture of what you do to manage your health. This will help ensure coordinated and safe care. For tips about talking with your health care providers about complementary and alternative medicine, see NCCAM's Time to Talk campaign at nccam.nih.gov/timetotalk/.

Sources

Morinda. Natural Medicines Comprehensive Database Web site. Accessed at www.naturaldatabase.com on August 5, 2009.

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Pawlus AD, Su B-N, Kinghorn A. Noni (*Morinda citrifolia*). In: Coates P, Blackman M, Cragg G, et al., eds. *Encyclopedia of Dietary Supplements*. 1st ed. [Online version]. London, UK: Informa Healthcare; 2005:1-8.

For More Information

Visit the NCCAM Web site at nccam.nih.gov and view *Using Dietary Supplements Wisely* (nccam.nih.gov/health/supplements/wiseuse.htm).

NCCAM Clearinghouse

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Web site: www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/sites/entrez

NIH Office of Dietary Supplements

Web site: www.ods.od.nih.gov

NIH National Library of Medicine's MedlinePlus

Noni Listing: www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/druginfo/natural/758.html

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