



Cancer Health Benefits of Fermented Wheat Germ

By: Dr. Jewel Johl

A form of wheat germ called fermented wheat germ is a mixture of natural compounds created from an extract made

from the fermentation of wheat germ using baker's yeast to concentrate certain naturally active compounds called benzoquinones. It was first invented in the early 1990s in Hungary, and is now available as a dietary supplement in the U.S.

A study in the *British Journal of Cancer* published in July, 2003, conducted in patients with colon cancer who had undergone various treatments such as surgery, chemotherapy and radiation, concluded that fermented wheat germ extract, in combination with surgery plus radio/chemotherapy may inhibit progression of cancer, including the formation of new metastases, and may prolong the survival of colorectal cancer patients. It is important to note that there were no serious side effects from this supplement other than its unpleasant taste.

Besides the benefit of this extract in patients suffering from colon cancer, it has shown promising activity in terms of reducing disease progression in patients with melanoma with stage III disease, a deadly form of skin cancer.

In addition to having direct anti-cancer properties, this extract also improves quality of life and alleviates fatigue in patients with advanced lung cancer and head and neck cancer.

Fermented wheat germ extract also regulates body's immune system to not only fight cancer cells, but also to decrease inflammation and pain in patients suffering from various autoimmune conditions such as rheumatoid arthritis and lupus. A study published in the journal *Clinical Experiments in Rheumatology* in 2006 demonstrated that morning stiffness was reduced when patients used the fermented wheat germ, and half the patients were able to significantly reduce their use of steroids. Reducing the reliance on steroids allowed patients to have fewer side effects associated with these drugs such as digestive problems, skin thinning, hypertension, increased blood glucose, increased cancer risk, and weight gain.

Please consult your doctor to see if this product is right for you.

Dr. Johl is a Medical Oncologist and Hematologist with Diablo Valley Oncology.