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Pomegranates: the latest weapon in the fight against MRSA

Pomegranates have already been hailed as a super-food but a team of scientists from Kingston University in South West London has found a new use for the deep red fruit. The team, led by Professor Declan Naughton, has discovered that the rind can be turned into an ointment for treating MRSA and other common hospital infections.



In a series of tests conducted over three years, Professor Naughton and researchers from the School of Life Sciences learnt that the infection-fighting properties of pomegranate were greatly enhanced by combining the rind of the fruit with two other natural products - metal salts and Vitamin C. "We have developed a topical ointment that can successfully attack a range of drug resistant microbes," Professor Naughton said. "It's a significant breakthrough and a striking example of the effectiveness of adding more components to create a more active product."



The tests were conducted using microbes such as MRSA (Methicillin-Resistant *Staphylococcus aureus*) taken from hospital patients. MRSA is an important pathogen - an agent of a disease - that can cause infections in humans and is difficult to combat because it has developed a resistance to some antibiotics. "The increase in drug-resistant infections found in hospitals has made our research topical and pressing," Professor Naughton said. "The idea of using a foodstuff is unusual and means that the body should be able to cope more easily with its application; patients are less likely to experience any major side-effects."

Pomegranate rind combined with metal salts was the most effective combination for treating MRSA, while other common hospital infections were better dealt with by all three components: pomegranate rind, metal salts and Vitamin C. Professor Naughton said it was exciting to discover a new use for natural products. "It shows that nature still has a few tricks up its sleeve," he said.

Additional information:

The research findings have been recently been published.

"Anti-microbial pomegranate rind extracts: enhancement by Cu(II) and vitamin C combinations against clinical isolates of *Pseudomonas aeruginosa*" by Simon W J Gould, Mark D Fielder, Alison F Kelly, Waffa El Sankary, Declan Naughton. *British Journal of Biomedical Science*. (2009) 66, 129-132. An abstract is available [here](#).

"Anti-microbial activities of pomegranate rind extracts: enhancement by cupric sulphate against clinical isolates of *S. aureus*, MRSA and PVL positive CA-MSSA" by Simon W J Gould, Mark D Fielder, Alison F Kelly, Declan Naughton. *BMC Complimentary and Alternative Medicine* (2009) 9, 23. A link to the paper is available [here](#).

The research was part-funded by a pharmaceutical company and by the Department

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