

# OPC-165 – The Heart of the Matter

As the frigid winds of January usher in the New Year, millions find they are eager to unshackle themselves from the burdens of recent holiday stresses and culinary overindulgence. New Year's resolutions are often created over concerns about personal health, and those resolutions will subject many of us to strict diets, health clubs, and the resolve to end some detrimental habits. Of



particular concern to millions of Americans is the prevention of heart disease, and the scientific literature suggests that the heart may be most vulnerable for injury during this time of the year. Adding to the anxiety is the recent testimony by an FDA scientist about risk of sudden cardiac death from currently prescribed medications like the recently-decommissioned Vioxx®, which is estimated to have caused 139,000 heart-related deaths. But despite the troubling news, some recent studies of the cardioprotective properties of oligomeric proanthocyanidin (or OPC) has heart researchers, clinicians and health-minded citizens alike fascinated about the possibility of incorporating a relatively inexpensive yet highly beneficial natural supplement to the diet.

According to the American Heart Association, the rate of death from heart attacks peaks during the winter months, specifically in December and January. Andrea McCreery, Ph.D., president of Life Sources wellness center in Fair Oaks, California, says medical research into the cause of seasonal heart attacks has proven to be inconclusive. “The theories range from stress and poor diet to lack of exercise to blood clotting from the colder temperatures. However, the one thing most researchers agree on is that the benefits of OPCs on the cardiac

system will be receiving a lot of media attention in the near future.”

As one of Life Sources' foundational supplements, OPC-165 represents the purest concentration of a highly specialized class of bioflavonoid that belongs to a group known as the “super-antioxidants.” As the name suggests, super-antioxidants

are the next generation of weapon in the war against the biochemical process of oxidation, which has been implicated in everything from premature wrinkles to DNA damage to heart disease. But of these super-antioxidant complexes, the OPC, a highly refined natural chemical derived from the seeds of grapes, stands far above the rest. Because of its molecular structure, one OPC molecule can neutralize several free radicals at once, while each molecule of vitamins C and E can handle only one at a time. OPCs provide significantly better protection than vitamins C and E, both singly and in combination.

It is widely understood that the most common causes of a heart attack are arrhythmia (loss of normal heart rhythm) and vessel blockages such as platelets that aggregate to form a clot, or a collection of foam cells (immune cells that collectively attack LDL cholesterol during a process known as lipid peroxidation). During a heart attack, or as it's known in medical terms, myocardial infarction, two phases of damage occur: the infarction and the reperfusion. The infarction occurs when the heart tissue is damaged by a lack of oxygen

due to a clot, foam cells or other obstruction in a blood vessel, while the reperfusion is the restoration of blood flow to the heart muscle that leads, ironically, to a significant amount of damage to the heart as a result of free radical oxidation. “It's pretty counterintuitive to think that through the process of bringing blood back into an oxygen-starved heart, damage could occur,” says Dr. McCreery. “But that is the nature of oxidative stress, and it's just one of the ways in which OPCs have been shown to be beneficial to cardiac health.”

A cursory look at the scientific literature reveals long-standing interest in OPCs as a cardioprotective agent. OPCs have been shown to minimize the damage of cardiac reperfusion injury, inhibit platelet aggregation as effectively as aspirin while (unlike aspirin) having no effect on bleeding times, reduce arrhythmias, inhibit the formation of foam cells by reducing lipid peroxidation, and normalize cholesterol levels.

Despite the voluminous body of research on OPCs' heart benefits, Dr. McCreery urges people to be realistic when considering any supplement. “Obviously, OPCs won't offset the effects of smoking or an unhealthy diet. OPCs aren't drugs; they're a dietary supplement that should be considered as just a small part of overall lifestyle modifications.” Still, Dr. McCreery allows herself some enthusiasm: “I have clients who swear by the OPC-165 product, and their cardiologists are amazed by the dramatic improvement. It's beyond gratifying to have these clients thank me for pointing them toward a product that substantially improves the quality of their lives. To me, that is the most meaningful endorsement anyone can give.” ■

See [www.freedompressonline.com](http://www.freedompressonline.com) for references.

## Resources

To schedule a consultation or to order the OPC-165 product, call Life Sources at (877) 536-9930 or visit them at their website, [www.life-sources.com](http://www.life-sources.com). OPC-165 is available in some health food stores and the company welcomes special orders from retailers for their customers.

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