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Dear Dr. Mustermann

Diseases of the urinary tract are widespread among the population and an extreme burden for those concerned. This medical condition may go back to completely different causes and thus require different treatment approaches. With this newsletter, we would like to discuss two natural remedies for problems of the urinary system. These are **cranberries** against what is an ordeal for all women, namely a bladder infection, and **pumpkin** for men as a supportive measure against problems with the lower urinary tract due to an enlarged prostate.

CRANBERRY



Urinary tract infections (UTI) are among the most frequent infections worldwide. More than 50% of all women suffer at least once in their lifetime from an infection of the urinary tract. Many women are prone to several urinary tract infections per year. Among the risks you find the resulting pyelitis or even a sepsis.

The most frequent pathogenic germs are uropathogenic *Escherichia coli* (UPEC). During the acute stage, the infections are usually treated using antibiotics. Furthermore, prophylactic antibiotics treatment may be considered for women who suffer from recurrent infections of the urinary tract. Frequent use of antibiotics can not only provoke resistance in the bacteria but also cause undesirable side-effects for the patient which cause further medical expenses to the health system and constitute a great burden for the patients. Thus preventing infections of the urinary tract is a major objective in the health system.

Products with cranberries can be remedial measures in this context. Several studies have shown that the occurrence of recurrent bladder infections is reduced significantly through regular consumption of cranberry preparations.

The assumption is that the adhesion of the germs to the urinary bladder epithelium is inhibited by cranberries. The reason is attributed to polyphenol proanthocyanidine A which is a natural component in cranberries. Juices as well as dried berries and powders in different dosage forms can be used. Standardised extracts are preferable. In standardised extracts one ingredient such as the aforementioned proanthocyanidines is enriched and standardised. This means a guarantee for a continuously unchanging quality and therefore a guarantee for the effects of the extract.

[Click here for our portfolio of standardised cranberry extracts >](#)

Facts about cranberry

The cranberry (*Vaccinium macrocarpon* AITON) is an evergreen dwarf shrub which spreads over the ground with low creeping branches. The dwarf shrub, common in the north-eastern states of America and Canada, is a member of the Ericaceae family. Either the ripe berries or their concentrated juice can be used for extraction.

PUMPKIN



Urinary tract problems in men may have diverse causes. One of them is the enlargement of the prostate gland also called hyperplasia. The prostate (prostate gland) surrounds the urethra in the form of a ring. Even at about 35 years of age, this gland can enlarge and from the age of 75 years, almost every man has a benign enlargement of the prostate. If, however, those parts of the prostate enlarge which are adjacent to the urethra, this may cause problems with passing water. This condition can prove to be very burdensome for the men concerned.

In Germany, herbal medicinal products are often used to treat benign prostate hyperplasia. Pumpkin (*Cucurbita pepo* L.), whose seeds or preparations thereof are used as medicinal products, is a widely used medicinal plant in this context.

In addition to fatty oils, carbohydrates and proteins, sterols and sterolglycosides (e.g. Δ^7 -sterol) are also found among the ingredients of pumpkin seeds. Apparently exactly those Δ^7 -sterols bring about the effectiveness of the medicinal pumpkin. By way of their similarity to dihydrotestosterone (which causes the enlargement of the prostate) Δ^7 -sterols can prevent the receptor binding of dihydrotestosterone.

In experiments with pumpkin, it has even been further possible to show an inhibition of the 5- α -reductase which transforms testosterone into dihydrotestosterone. Clinical studies could prove a real improvement of the sleep quality due to a reduced urge to void after pumpkin preparations were taken. Thus the quality of life of men concerned can be considerably enhanced by the intake of pumpkin preparations.

[Click here for our portfolio of pumpkin extracts >](#)

Facts about pumpkin

Cucurbita pepo L. is a member of the cucurbits family (Cucurbitaceae). It originated in Mexico and Texas and was imported into Europe. Today it is cultivated worldwide, particularly in Austria (Styria) followed by Hungary and China as main suppliers. Pumpkin is an annual plant with creeping and climbing shoots.

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IMPRINT

Headquarters

Anklam Extrakt GmbH

Johann-Friedrich-Böttger-Straße 4
17389 Anklam
Germany

Sales office

Anklam Extrakt GmbH

Campus Marienberg
Marienbergstraße 92
90411 Nuremberg
Germany

Court of registration: Neubrandenburg

Register number: HRB 17217
VAT ID no. in accordance with Section 27a of
the German Value Added Tax Act (UStG):
DE254700277

Main telephone no.: +49 3971 24110-0

E-Mail: info@anklam-extrakt.com

Main telephone no.: +49 911 247901-11

E-Mail: sales@anklam-extrakt.com

Authorised representatives/Management:

Claudia Pühn, Klaus Schekahn, Mirko Bröcker

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