

Researchers around the world have worked on the health properties of Rooibos for almost 50 years, mostly in laboratories (*in vitro*) and in animals (*in vivo*). Abstracts of many scientific articles about the health benefits of Rooibos can be accessed via the official web site of the South African Rooibos Council at [www.sarooibos.org.za](http://www.sarooibos.org.za)

# Rooibos research fact sheet

## Key findings to date include:

- Rooibos contains a complex and abundant blend of antioxidants.
- Rooibos is the only known source of a specifically beneficial and rare antioxidant called aspalathin.
- Unfermented (green) Rooibos has higher levels of antioxidants than traditional, fermented Rooibos.
- The complex mixture of antioxidants (known as polyphenols) in Rooibos may help protect against free radicals and limit their impact in the body. Free radicals are unstable molecules that can damage the DNA in cells, leading to cancer. These free radicals can also oxidise cholesterol, leading to clogged blood vessels, heart attack and stroke.
- Rooibos slows down the development of several kinds of cancer, including cancer of the skin, liver and oesophagus.
- Rooibos inhibits certain inflammatory skin diseases and makes the skin less sensitive to damage from the sun.
- Rooibos increases the antioxidant status of rat's livers. Some researchers recommend Rooibos for people with chronic liver problems.
- Rooibos protects the brains of aged rats against oxidative damage. This could play a role in the treatment of Alzheimer's disease.
- Rooibos promotes the production of antibodies when immune systems are challenged.
- Rooibos delays the recurrence of herpes simplex virus in humans.
- Rooibos is an effective antispasmodic and can be used to relieve gastrointestinal disorders such as abdominal spasms and diarrhoea.

Many of these findings require more research before specific recommendations about the use of Rooibos can be made. Several research groups around the world are currently exploring the huge potential for future research into the health properties of Rooibos.

Find out more about Rooibos history, uses, industry and innovations at [www.sarooibos.org.za](http://www.sarooibos.org.za)

Web site launch: 9 November 2007