

## NewsTarget.com printable article

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### **Lupeol Compound in Fruits Found to Destroy Cancer Tumors in the Head and Neck Faster Than Chemotherapy Drugs**

by David Gutierrez

(NewsTarget) A chemical that naturally occurs in certain fruits such as grapes, mangoes and strawberries may be able to suppress the growth and spread of head and neck cancers, according to a study conducted by researchers at the University of Hong Kong and published in the journal *Cancer Research*.

Researchers induced head and neck cancer in mice and then gave the mice doses of the chemical lupeol, a triterpene compound found in many fruits. The lupeol appeared to block the function of a protein called NFkB, which assists both healthy and malignant cells in the process of growth and repair. In addition, the growth and spread of the [cancer](#) appeared to be slowed.

"From the animal models, not only did [lupeol] suppress the spread, the tumor got smaller. Compared to conventional drugs, lupeol reduced the size of the tumor far faster," researcher Terence Lee said.

In addition, lupeol did not appear to cause the wasting often associated with [chemotherapy](#). Such thinning is thought to be correlated with lower cancer survival rates.

"Conventional drugs made the mice a lot thinner, but lupeol mice retained their bulk," Lee said.

Cancers of the head and neck include nose, oral, salivary gland, throat, thyroid and voice box [cancers](#). Such cancers are more common among those of Asian than European descent. Risk factors in these cancers include smoking, drinking excessive alcohol, chewing betel nut and a diet high in preserved foods such as salted fish. Because the cancers are hard to diagnose in early stages and head or neck surgery is particularly difficult, mortality tends to be high.

According to researcher Anthony Yuen, the phytonutrient lupeol may eventually provide a useful treatment for not just head and neck cancers, but also cancers of the liver, prostate or breast -- all of which are known to activate the NFkB protein.

Lupeol is also present in saw palmetto, olive seed and certain vegetables.

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