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Chemicals in Olive Oil Could Hold the Key to New Breast Cancer Therapies

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By Anna Boyd 1 vote 14:18, December 18th 2008 Vote this story







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Olive oil has been known for years as an "elixir" for the human body preventing heart disease by lowering bad cholesterol, skin and colon cancer, **blood** pressure. Alzheimer's and gallstones. But it could also hold the key to creating new therapies for **breast** cancer after researchers discovered it contains chemicals that stop cancerous cells arowina.

A team of researchers from the University of Granada in Spain found two chemicals in the oil blocked the protein involved in some breast cancers. The protein involved is HER2 protein and research shows that one in fifths of breast cancer tumors have it, making it grow more quickly than other breast cancer tumors.

The researchers say found that phytochemicals (lignans and secoiridoids), chemicals present in extra-virgin olive oil, effectively inhibited the breast cancer gene HER2.

Javier Menendez, of the Catalan Institute of Oncology, said, "our findings reveal for the first time that all major complex phenols present in extravirgin olive oil drastically suppress overexpression of the cancer gene HER2 in human breast cancer cells ."

Phytochemicals are only present in the extra-virgin olive oil, which is obtained by pressing olives without the use of heat or chemical

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Cancer said.

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The researchers are now hopeful that these polyphenols might provide "an excellent and safe platform for the design of new anti-breast cancer drugs," they wrote in the open-access journal BMC Cancer. However, they said that there's no evidence that consuming large amounts of olive oil will reduce a woman's risk of breast cancer \ Dr. Sarah Cant, policy manager at the charity Breakthrough Breast

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