

Antioxidants of Rooibos tea - a possible explanation for its health promoting properties?

Abstract

Rooibos tea, an indigenous South African herbal tea, is considered to be a health drink with a beneficial effect on human health. The unique phenolic metabolites of rooibos tea acting as potent antioxidants may be the key to its therapeutic value. Recent research in Japan indicated antimutagenic, anticarcinogenic, anti-inflammatory and antiviral activity for rooibos tea infusions. These activities are associated with antioxidative properties of rooibos tea. Free radical damage and the protective role of antioxidants with emphasis on flavonoids present in rooibos tea, are briefly discussed.