

# Rooibos Tea: Research into Antioxidant and Antimutagenic Properties

## abstract

Antioxidants are hot topics in the health news these days, and an herbal tea called rooibos (pronounced ROY-boss) is becoming popular partly because it is being marketed as a healthy beverage with high levels of antioxidants. The rooibos plant (*Aspalathus linearis* (Burm. f.) Dahlgren, Fabaceae) is a South African flowering shrub used to make a mild-tasting tea that has no caffeine, very little tannin, and significant amounts of polyphenol antioxidants. Although the tea is new to many Americans, it has been made in the Cedarberg mountain region of South Africa for generations. Distributors are promoting the tea for numerous health benefits, citing recent studies that show some antioxidants found in rooibos tea may protect against cancer, heart disease, and stroke. What's the evidence for these claims?