A SUMMARY OF THE CURRENT RESEARCH

Olive Leaf extract (OLE) is derived from the olive leaf and contains a wide variety of compounds and biophenols which work synergistically to deliver a multitude of therapeutic actions. The two most prominent biophenols found in olive leaf extract are oleuropein and hydroxytyrosol which research relates most commonly to its health benefits.

OLE compounds work synergistically to deliver a multitude of therapeutic actions:

HEART HEALTH
- A 2008 paper assessed the effects of olive leaf extract to reduce blood pressure in borderline hypertensive monozygotic twins. Results confirmed the anti-hypertensive and lipid-lowering effects of olive leaf extract.
- A 2014 double-blind, placebo controlled cross-over human dietary intervention trial evaluated the effects of regularly consuming a combination of olive leaf, green coffee bean and beetroot extracts on blood pressure, arterial compliance, blood lipids, blood glucose and insulin sensitivity. Results showed that there was no significant effect on any outcome measures tested.
- A randomised controlled trial published in 2017 has demonstrated that phenolic-rich olive leaf extract had hypotensive and lipid-lowering effects.
- Olive leaf extract has also been shown to improve vascular function in human research.

ANTIMICROBIAL AND ANTIVIRAL ACTIVITY
- In vitro and animal studies show that olive leaf extract has some potential activity against the influenza virus.
- Research suggests that olive leaf extract may reduce the infectivity and inhibit the replication of viruses that cause colds, influenza and lower respiratory tract infections – further clinical trials in humans are needed to validate these findings.
- Olive leaf extract has been shown to stimulate phagocytosis – which may enhance the body’s response to a viral infection.
- Gargling olive leaf tea may alleviate symptoms of a sore throat – potentially due to a reduction of inflammation and viral infectivity.

ANTIOXIDANT ACTIVITY
- In 2007, published research showed that olive leaf extract had one of the highest free radical scavenging activities of 55 medicinal herbs tested, including green tea and milk thistle.
- In vitro and animal studies have also demonstrated that oleuropein, one of the key biophenols found in olive leaf extract, acts to reduce Low-Density Lipoprotein (LDL) oxidation.

OLIVE LEAF AND THE METABOLIC SYNDROME
- Olive polyphenols have convincing evidence (in dietary intervention trials) of reducing risk factors for metabolic syndrome, by improving blood sugar and blood pressure control, and in reducing LDL oxidation.
- Supplementation with olive leaf polyphenols on for twelve weeks significantly improved insulin sensitivity, pancreatic B-cell secretory capacity and cardiovascular risk factors in overweight middle-aged men at risk of metabolic syndrome.

It must be noted that overall, there is limited research related to the health attributes of olive leaf extract in humans. There is also an absence of systematic literature reviews.


