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**Menopause, Andropause And Other Hormone Imbalances**  
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**Brushing With Cranberries? Maybe Later**

**By Nathan Fischer**

Many of us remember the time from around last November when a flurry of reports citing Tel Aviv University and the University of Rochester suggested we might be brushing with cranberries soon.

The University of Rochester tested the effect of cranberries on a synthetic enamel-like substance, and found that the tart little fruit had strong abilities to repel cavity-causing bacteria, even warding off the formation of plaque.

Immediately, the world saw a super-effective cranberry toothpaste in its future. True, fluoridated public water had already cut down on our average number of cavities substantially, but perhaps if we combined fluoride with a super-toothpaste, we'd see them disappear altogether.

Not so fast, say researchers and dentists. One of the drawbacks is that normally, we add and consume vast amounts of sugar with our cranberries. Needless to say, the Rochester experiments did not add sugar to the mix, yet most of the popular cranberry products on our store shelves are loaded with it.

No problem, said those of us who like to keep up on dental trends. What if we just add xylitol, a somewhat scary-sounding but natural sweetener that's been shown to do its own number on *S. mutans* and even reverse minor tooth decay in some instances?

Even then, we still have a problem. Because cranberries are not only bitter, they're extremely acidic. Applying acidic products to your teeth can end up softening the tooth enamel. Our teeth have the ability to recover and harden up again, but if they encounter acidic substances too often, the enamel will eventually start to erode.

So for now, just wait, say dentists. The trick is to isolate all the beneficial compounds in cranberries while removing the need to partner it with truckloads of sugar, and avoiding the acid problem. Needless to say, manufacturers are on the trail, but they haven't gotten there yet.

That isn't to say you won't find any cranberry-containing toothpastes — some, produced by smaller outfits, have already hit the market. If you look at these products, you'll see that they claim to have

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isolated all the positive cranberry compounds already. For those who like to experiment, it might be worth a try. But if you'd rather wait for a wider understanding that cranberry compounds have been properly identified and isolated before you switch toothpastes, go ahead.

Still, consider eating your cranberries anyway, even if it's not Thanksgiving. They've been shown to come with loads of benefits, including an ability to help prevent clogged arteries and inhibit hostile bacteria in the stomach and urinary tract. Cranberries have also been shown to reduce LDL cholesterol, prevent kidney stones, and even aid in recovery from stroke.

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about curing chronic halitosis and to download the free Bad Breath Bible:

<http://www.curesforbadbreath.com/badbreathbible/>

## Easy Trail Mixes

### By Deborah Shelton

Before you set off on your next family walk or outing, try making one of these super easy trail mixes to keep your energy up.

\* Quick Fix Mix 2 cups mini pretzels 1 cup cheese snack crackers 1 cup honey roasted peanuts  
1 cup raisins

Place all ingredients into a plastic baggie, seal, and then shake. Enjoy!

\* Chocolate Popcorn Mix 2 cups spoon size shredded wheat cereal 2 cups popped popcorn 1 cup  
dried cranberries 3 Tbsp. milk chocolate chunks

Toss cereal and popcorn into a large bowl. Place the cranberries into a small bowl. Melt the chocolate as directed on the package, and stir. Pour the chocolate over the cranberries and mix lightly. Add the chocolate cranberries to the cereal mixture, and toss lightly. Spread the mix into a single layer on a large piece of wax paper. Let it cool completely before serving.

\* Fruity Nut Mix 1/2 cup sunflower seeds 1/2 cup raisins 1 cup dried banana chips 1/2 cup shredded  
coconut 1 cup unsalted peanuts 1 cup dried fruit bits

Place all of the ingredients into a plastic baggie, seal, and then shake. Fast, easy and yummy!

Deborah Shelton is a mother, freelance writer, and author of the brand new book, "The Five Minute

Parent: Fun & Fast Activities for You and Your Little Ones." Visit Deborah's website for more family-friendly ideas:

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