The term “arthritis” is often used to describe an array of rheumatoid diseases resulting in joint pain, including bursitis, tendonitis, systemic lupus, and connective- and soft-tissue diseases. Regardless of the rheumatoid disease, chronic pain—ranging from mild to severe—and loss of energy are usually present. Poor diets, toxic environments, and excessive stress are causing one-third of the population to suffer from joint disease. By the year 2020, it is estimated that 40 million Americans will suffer from some form of arthritis.

Common arthritis, known as osteoarthritis or degenerative joint disease, is found in the joints of the body and, most commonly, in the knees and fingers. Continued wear and tear causes these joints to become inflamed and sore, and the cartilage that normally cushions the joints breaks down, leaving the bones to rub against each other. Characteristically, osteoarthritis is exhibited as pain, stiffness, or swelling in joints such as the hip, hand, knee, or spine; however, it may affect other joints as well. Often a person’s condition exacerbates with age because of continued wear and tear.

Rheumatoid arthritis, on the other hand, can attack at any age and can affect any part of the body, which is why it is considered a systemic disease. An autoimmune disorder, rheumatoid arthritis occurs when the body’s immune system malfunctions by attacking healthy joint tissues, mistaking them for foreign invaders. The result is severe stiffness and acute, chronic pain; affected joints often develop red, painful lumps. An overload of synovial fluid around the joints contributes to swelling and lack of mobility. All joints are affected by the disease, particularly the wrist and hand joints. As the malady progresses, chronic inflammation eventually destroys cartilage, tendons, and ligaments in the affected joints.

There is a large body of evidence that associates oxidative stress with osteoarthritis. When free radicals are found in large amounts, it seems to cause a major metabolic disturbance that affects people suffering from osteoarthritis. Some researchers believe that oxidative stress actually causes joint destruction and adds to the advancement of osteoarthritis. All the toxins and free radicals we encounter compromise those cells in our immune system, in our joints, and lining our intestines. This is the origin of many diseases, including arthritis. As mentioned above, this inflammation and oxidation can be caused by poor diets that are high in processed sugars and fats and are lacking vital nutrients necessary to maintain healthy cell membranes, like antioxidants and anti-inflammation agents.
Ningxia Wolfberry: Phytonutrient Superstar

The good news is that many foods and supplements are extremely rich in compounds that fight free radicals to help protect from conditions like arthritis. Antioxidants found in fruits such as the Ningxia wolfberry can help fight free radicals in the body, helping to protect cell membranes and improve immunological function. The wolfberry has been used in China for centuries in the treatment of a variety of diseases. In fact, it is the Ningxia region of China that reportedly boasts the most potent variety of the berry. Use of the wolfberry is now gaining popularity in the Western world for its medicinal benefits due to its antioxidant properties, including benefits for arthritis and other joint disorders.

Growing and harvesting the berry today is done much like it has been for generations. The oblong, red berries can be eaten raw, dried, consumed as juice or wine, brewed into an herbal tea, or prepared as a tincture.

As a result, wolfberry has found its way to the thresholds of some of the world’s leading laboratories and pharmaceutical companies. It is highly valued for its pleasant taste, nutrient value, and medicinal properties. Since 2005, wolfberry has been increasingly mentioned in reports on the emerging functional food industry as one of the “exotic superfruits.” The term “superfruit” is meant to imply nutrient richness with medical research results indicating potential health benefits, combined with uncommon but appealing taste, pigmentation, and antioxidant strength.

Ningxia wolfberry also contains significant percentages of a day’s macronutrient needs—carbohydrates, protein, healthy fats, and dietary fiber. In addition to these macronutrients, wolfberry has 11 essential and 22 trace dietary minerals, 18 amino acids, 6 essential vitamins, and high concentrations of other nutrients such as beta-carotene, lutein, calcium, potassium, and iron. The berries are a storehouse of amino acids, antioxidants, vitamins and minerals, in addition to many unique phytochemicals, complex compounds, and polysaccharides.

The Arthritis Answer?

Modern science reveals that the secret behind the successful use of wolfberry for so many health benefits lies in its rich nutritional reservoirs. Wolfberry is reputed for its beneficial effects in the treatment of immunodeficient diseases such as rheumatoid arthritis; its anti-inflammatory properties and antioxidants help detoxify the body and reduce swelling. These essential fatty acids are needed, since the lack of omega-3 fatty acids in the Western diet can cause inflammation and contribute to arthritis. In addition to the essential fatty acids, wolfberry also contains a high number of amino acids that aid in counteracting inflammation in the body by fending off free-radical damage. The amino acid L-arginine plays an important role in cell division, the healing of wounds, inflammation control, and immune function.

The polysaccharides found in Ningxia wolfberry support proper cell communication. Many published scientific studies address the connection between cell-to-cell communication and autoimmune diseases like AIDS, rheumatoid arthritis, and diabetes. Foods rich in antioxidants, such as wolfberry, work to keep our hormones in balance to help blood clot normally, to support cell structure and function, and most importantly, to create and sustain a complex cellular communication system.

As shown in all the reasons above, consuming a diet high in antioxidant-rich foods such as Ningxia wolfberry can help those suffering from arthritis and other joint conditions to support normal immune function, experience relief from pain, reduce swelling, and gain energy.