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DR. CHARLES' HEALTH CHAT

PAPAYA, MELON OF HEALTH

This amazing fruit, easily taken for granted in the Caribbean, was first noted in the records when Herman Cortez invaded Mexico in 1519. Welcomed by the deceived Mayans, they served his soldiers slices of a "golden melon" to stop their stomach pains. Asking where this fruit came from, there were taken to the jungle and shown "Ababai.." This was adopted to the Spanish name *papaya*, notes the records of Bishop Jiminez, found in the Vatican. The story then leads to Captain Cook, who took it to Hawaii, and later, the Japanese who commercialized the fruit with the production of its enzyme, *papain*, today known as a meat tenderizer.

Papaya is now cultivated in most parts of the world, including Cuba, Jamaica, Kenya, Uganda, and Lake Tanganyika. It was the U.S. Department of Agriculture Chemist, however, Dr. Arnold Balls, who advanced much of the knowledge of the papaya, and its enzyme, papain. This enzyme helps digestion, relieves the distress of stomach upset and even ulcers, offsets constipation and flatus.

The natives of all countries where papaya is grown prize its powder for not only tenderizing meat, but also cleansing and softening one's own skin. Its enzyme is now used in facial cleansers and shampoos after seeing native women in the tropics rub the raw juice on their faces to remove wrinkles. When scientifically researched, it also had a peeling effect on freckles and sunspots, and also relieving the itching in eczema.

But this plant's healing properties go even further. The author recounts the teachings given to him by the famous Dr. Kesheva Bhatt, professor of medical botany at the University of Caracas. He cured remarkable cases of heart disease simply by prescribing a week's fast on papaya fruit and water. The author saw scores of case histories of angina and hypertension being cured by this amazingly simple prescription.

An important, but forgotten study was made by Dr. Herbert Traut, professor of medicine at the University of California. He used papain solution to diagnose cancer. He found that by administering this enzyme solution, those who had cancer became sick and nauseated due to the digestive action of the enzyme on the tumor. Powdered papain has been used in the past by some doctors after tonsillectomy. The enzyme digests the mucus and pus around the incision, aiding healing and preventing infection. The enzyme is harmless to healthy tissue.

So effective are its digestive powers, it is used in India as a tooth powder. Here it is an excellent cleanser and has a healing effect on ulcerated gums.

Papaya is also a big help to those new to vegetarian lifestyle. The World Health Organization recommends that an equal portion of grain mixed with beans which provides a complete protein equal to the amount of meat. Newcomers to health cuisine start out offended by the gas beans offer when not

thoroughly chewed and digested. They will find however, this is only temporary. Good advice is to soak the beans in “meat tenderizer” overnight prior to cooking. Then pour off the soaking water as the complex starches and proteins which are hard to digest are removed. Soaking also softens the beans, making them easier to cook and thus digest. Crispy and crunchy beans should not be eaten in favor of the next of kin. They should also be thoroughly chewed, as all food, allowing the digestive enzymes in saliva to do their job. Also, do not drink cold liquids when eating as this also stops the digestive process.

So next time you reach for “Adolphs Meat Tenderizer,” remember the story well. In 1943, this famous Hollywood chef began mixing spices with powdered papain and sold it as *Adolph's Shake-On Tenderizer*. Adolph Remp sold out to Rigler and Deutsch, who substituted the spices with common salt, finding it bled the meat faster.



Although it appears as a tree, it is actually a herbacious plant, producing up to 250 melons per year.

But in spite of that, you do not have to sacrifice an animal to get results with papain. We on Nevis can eat the fruit fresh for its prized amounts of Vitamin C. The tenderizer will give you wonderful results with kidney beans, black beans, lentils, pinto beans, and dozens of other members of phaseoli and even the unfavored favas.

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