

# **Rooibos Tea - Health Benefits - Antioxidants**

## *by Jess Ba-ad*

Rooibos is an African name for 'red bush', its scientific name is 'aspalathus linearis'. Rooibos is a natural herb found in a small area in South Africa, the Cedarberg Mountains. The leaves are processed to make tea and brings many health benefits to the body. The tea is nowhere related to green tea from the plant camella sinensis.

Popularly called 'red tea', the plant is far from the color red, it is actually green. The red color only appears after the oxidation or fermentation process of tea making.

Rooibos tea or red tea does not contain caffeine making it suitable even for children. No sugar may be added because it is naturally sweet.

The antioxidant content of rooibos tea: The two primary antioxidants in the rooibos tea are aspalathin and nothofagin. Aspalathin is unique to rooibos while nothofagin can be found in some other plants.

Aspalathin contain phenolic acids such as ferulic acid, p-coumaric acid, vanillic acid, syringic acid , p-hydroxybenzoic acid, caffeic acid and protocatechuic acid. It also contains flavonoids such as isoquercitrin, rutin, quercetin, iso-vitexin, vitexin, chrysoeriol, orientin, iso-orientin and luteolin. So much for those scientific names, these compounds are all beneficial to the body.

Mineral content: Aside from the antioxidants, rooibos tea also contain lots of minerals which can aid your body in maintaining a healthy nervous system and metabolic processes giving you healthy bones, teeth and skin. Copper, iron, magnesium, calcium, zinc and potassium are some minerals which can be found in rooibos tea.

Rooibos tea is ideal for people who are prone to kidney stones since it does not contain oxalic acid.

Compared to black tea and green tea, the tannin content of rooibos is relatively small making your body absorb more iron and other minerals and does not disrupt proper digestion.

Rooibos tea have been used in Africa to aid in many health problems including insomnia, nervous tension, hypertension, irritability and headaches. Its anti-spasmodic agents can relieve colic in infants and stomach cramping.

Allergies such as eczema, asthma and hay fever can be treated by drinking rooibos tea.

Not only is rooibos beneficial when taken internally, it can also be applied topically to treat irritated skin and minor wounds. Antioxidants are naturally anti-fungal, anti-viral and anti-bacterial making it suitable for this application.

Other health benefits of rooibos tea: It makes a good alternative for NSAIDs to relieve inflammations. NSAIDs(Non Steroidal Anti Inflammatory Drugs) can be detrimental to your health especially the gastrointestinal tract when taken for a prolonged period of time. Rooibos tea has no side effects making it a healthier alternative as an anti inflammatory.

Free radicals are the starting point of potential oxidative damage to your cells. The antioxidants in rooibos tea can neutralize these free radicals before doing any damage.

Commercial applications of rooibos tea: Rooibos tea have been included as ingredients for soaps, facial creams and shampoos. Users claim that it makes their skin softer and smoother. Others say that it clears up psoriasis and acne.

If you want to consider rooibos tea as part of your healthy diet, you can find many products which can be purchased online.

## About the Author

The author blogs about antioxidants where you can find a topic on [rosacea home remedies](#) and [herbal green tea](#). You may also want to learn about [green tea extract](#).