

## Letter to Editor

### White tea: A contributor to oral health

Madam,

Tea has been reported to be a very popular beverage among a wide range of populations. It has shown to have many beneficial effects on our oral health. There are many types of tea that have been manufactured and each has shown to have a good effect on the teeth. White tea goes well with healthy white teeth and gums.<sup>[1]</sup>

White tea consists of mainly fluoride, tannins and flavonoids. The bioavailability of fluoride from tea has been demonstrated to be around 34%, which would be effective in reducing caries.<sup>[2]</sup> Tannins inhibit salivary amylase so that it reduces the cariogenic potential of starch-containing foods. It inhibits the growth of *Streptococcus mutans*, a major factor for the formation of plaque. Flavonoids and common polyphenols, especially catechins, have exhibited inhibitory effects on the growth of plaque bacteria. Catechins are at a higher level in this tea.<sup>[3]</sup> The antioxidant property of white tea because of polyphenols has shown considerable potential to reduce an individual's risk of cancer.<sup>[1]</sup>

Studies have shown that two to four cups of white tea per day yield great health benefits. Also, white tea can be steeped to extract all the nutrients in it.<sup>[4]</sup>

There is more *in vitro* evidence on the advantages of white tea that is non-conclusive. It will be beneficial to carry out more research and long-term clinical trials in this promising area as tea is a common drink for many in many countries on a daily basis.

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