Sore muscles, aching joints? Maybe you should try tart cherry juice. Yes, Tart Cherry Juice. Why? Because consumption of about 45 cherries a day has been shown to reduce circulating concentrations of inflammatory markers in healthy men and women. A 12 oz bottle of cherry juice contains the equivalent of 50 - 60 cherries.

Researchers in Michigan are actively studying the tart cherry for many health benefits. One group of compounds they are looking at are anthocyanins which belong to a group of compounds called flavonoids. Anthocyanins are plant pigments which give cherries their dark red color. The darker the cherry color the higher the anthocyanin content. Anthocyanins have been found to block two enzymes, COX-1 and COX-2 which play a role in the production of inflammatory compounds called prostaglandins.

Anthocyanins are natural antioxidants. The free radical theory may account for age related changes and antioxidants may have protective characteristics.

Tart cherries include Montmorency and Balaton varieties and are primarily produced in Michigan. Other sources of anthocyanines include prunes, blueberries, blackberries, strawberries, raspberries, plums, oranges, red grapes, and watermelon.

Other possible benefits of tart cherry juice:

Work of University of Michigan researchers Dr Steven F. Bolling, E. Mitchell Seymour, Dr Sara Warber suggest that tart cherry juice may lower blood sugar and insulin levels (in laboratory rats), and lower total cholesterol levels and triglycerides.

Michigan State University researchers Drs Muralee G. Nair and Gale Strasburg found antioxidant effects of tart cherries.

References:


University of Michigan Website:
http://www.med.umich.edu/index.htm

Michigan State University Website:
http://www.hrt.msu.edu

Google: tart cherry juice health benefits