

# Pomegranate and Sumac for COVID-19 Symptom Relief: A Clinical Trial

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**Written By:** [GreenMedInfo Research Group](#) [1]

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***Before you head to a clinic, check your kitchen - what you need to fight COVID-19 symptoms may already be in your pantry***

A recent clinical trial published in *Mediators of Inflammation* explored using pomegranate juice and sumac spice to help relieve **COVID-19** [3] symptoms. The randomized controlled study on 182 outpatients found the supplemental foods reduced issues like fever, cough, nausea, and more versus standard care alone. This highlights the potential for certain natural agents to help confront viruses when used alongside conventional approaches.

## **Summary of Clinical Trial Methods and Outcomes**

The trial took place at an Iranian health center during the country's first pandemic wave. Eligible adult outpatients who tested positive for COVID-19 without requiring hospitalization were recruited and randomly split into two groups.

The treatment group consumed 200 mL **pomegranate** [4] juice three times per day and 1.5 grams **sumac** [5] spice twice daily on top of standard symptomatic medications like acetaminophen as needed. The control group received only standard medical care. After the roughly one-month intervention period, COVID-19 symptoms were reassessed.

Multiple respiratory, pain, gastrointestinal, and constitutional symptoms improved more in the phytonutrient-supplemented group. For example, the pomegranate/sumac cohort saw bigger decreases in rates of fever (75% to 0% in men), cough (97% to 27%), muscle pain (100% to 2%), diarrhea (84% to 2%), and weakness (85% to 12%) than controls. The supplementary foods were well tolerated without adverse effects.<sup>[1]</sup>

## Mechanisms of Botanical Agents Against Viruses

Pomegranates contain compounds like punicalagin and anthocyanins that exhibit antiviral, antioxidant and anti-inflammatory properties based on previous research.<sup>[2]</sup> Ellagitannins may inhibit viral binding, entry, replication and activity through direct virion damage and host cell effects.<sup>[3]</sup>

Similarly, sumac is rich in gallic acid, flavonoids and anthocyanins. Past studies reveal antiviral effects against influenza, herpesviruses and HIV. Proposed mechanisms include inhibition of neuraminidase enzymes in flu viruses preventing cell penetration and tannins deactivating herpesvirus particles before infection occurs.<sup>[4]</sup>



While clinical signs improved, this study did not measure actual viral levels. But the symptom control, especially combined with conventional care, highlights natural products' therapeutic potential for viruses through multimodal actions.

## Implications for Integrative COVID-19 Therapy

This trial focused on outpatients with relatively mild disease not needing hospital admission. Yet the implications span the full COVID-19 severity spectrum.

The anti-inflammatory characteristics of phytochemicals may help counter the excessive cytokine production behind pneumonia and acute respiratory distress syndrome in severe cases, for example.<sup>[5]</sup> Additionally, properties like improving antioxidant status could protect organ tissues from damage attributed to virus infection.<sup>[6]</sup>

While **vaccines**<sup>[6]</sup>, antivirals and monoclonal antibodies dominate the standard of care as primary medical therapies, this study and past research suggest certain supplemental foods like pomegranate and sumac carry benefits too.<sup>[7]</sup>

This promising new study indicates the diverse phytochemicals in plants offer much therapeutic promise against viruses like SARS-CoV-2. Intelligently incorporating select natural products alongside standard treatments appears an evidence-based adjunctive approach. More rigorous trials are warranted, but this clinical study reveals pomegranate and sumac's anti-COVID-19 symptom utility.

**Visit the GreenMedInfo databases on [Pomegranate](#) [4], [Sumac](#) [5], and [Coronavirus Disease](#) [3] to learn more about each of these subjects.**

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**IMPORTANT NOTE ON 'GERM THEORY' AND COVID-19:** Discussion of COVID-19 and infectious disease often comes with a wide range of unexamined assumptions, including the presumed lethality of viral particles, or even that viruses per se exist as classically defined by virologists. This is not something that should go without discussion and debate, as the topic deserves a much deeper exploration than is presently being conducted by the mainstream media and conventional medical authorities. In order to rectify this conspicuous lacunae, Sayer Ji has presented an alternative perspective which calls into question conventional models of infectious disease and contagion attributed to viruses, replacing it with what he calls the Xenogen Hypothesis. Learn more by watching his two presentations on the topic. 1) [Covid-19: is it really about a virus?](#) [7] And 2) [A New Biophysical Paradigm: Viruses, Exosomes, & Infection with Sayer Ji](#) [8].

## References

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[10]

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