



PATIENT & CAREGIVER EDUCATION

Synsepalum dulcificum

This information describes the common uses of *Synsepalum dulcificum*, how it works, and its possible side effects.

Tell your healthcare providers about any dietary supplements you're taking, such as herbs, vitamins, minerals, and natural or home remedies. This will help them manage your care and keep you safe.

What is it?

Preliminary data suggest *Synsepalum dulcificum* may change taste sensation from sour to sweet in patients undergoing chemotherapy, but it has not been shown to prevent weight loss.

Synsepalum dulcificum is a West African plant that produces red berries commonly known as miracle fruit. A protein found in these berries can bind to the sweet taste receptors of the tongue. This causes many sour, acidic

foods to taste sweet, and the effects may last for one to two hours. Miracle fruit has been proposed for use in taste changes caused by chemotherapy and for weight loss, but studies are quite limited. Data suggest that some patients undergoing chemotherapy reported improved taste, but no change in weight with miracle fruit.

What are the potential uses and benefits?

- **Low calorie sweetener**
Although miracle fruit may make things taste sweeter, it has not been shown to help weight loss.
- **Taste changes caused by chemotherapy**
Small studies suggest benefits. Larger studies are needed.

What are the side effects?

- Stomach ache and throat discomfort have been reported.

What else do I need to know?

Do Not Take if:

- You are allergic to this fruit.

If you have questions or concerns, contact your healthcare provider. A member of your care team will answer Monday through Friday from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Outside those hours, you can leave a message or talk with another MSK provider. There is always a doctor or nurse on call. If you're not sure how to reach your healthcare provider, call 212-639-2000.

For more resources, visit www.mskcc.org/pe to search our virtual library.

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