

What Is Organic Blueberry Powder and Is It Healthy?

By Alicia Armeli

As we bid blueberry season a bittersweet farewell, many wonder how they can continue to incorporate this superfruit into their daily health regimen. Frozen blueberries seem to be a reliable go-to but, as for me, I wanted to try something new and exciting.

Three words:

Organic Blueberry Powder.

Organic blueberry powder is the result of taking freeze-dried, or in some cases dehydrated, organic blueberries and pulverizing them until they are a gorgeous violet-pink delicate dust. Because the flavors and nutrients are concentrated into a versatile texture—the taste, possibilities for use, and health benefits are endless.

Providing a burst of summer, blueberry powder can easily complement baked goods, yogurt, oatmeal, and of course my personal favorite—smoothies. Blueberry powder adds flavor without all the retained moisture that frozen-thawed fruit often has. No matter which culinary foray summons its use, you won't be disappointed.

Full of free-radical neutralizing antioxidants such as vitamin C, E, and beta-carotene along with blue-hued anthocyanin polyphenols, blueberries have been found to fight inflammation and oxidative damage to cells.¹ Because of these properties, research has found them to show promise in the fight against cancer¹, age-related memory and motor function deficits², and more.

A study published in *Nutrition Research*¹ looked at the effects regular blueberry powder consumption had on 25 sedentary individuals 18-50 years of age over a six-week period. Individuals in the study were given either blueberry powder or a placebo powder and were instructed to consume two 19-gram packets (the equivalent of about 2 ½ tablespoons total) per night.

In comparison to lab values at the start of the study, the group consuming blueberry powder experienced considerable cardiovascular benefits. Individuals saw a decrease in augmentation index—a measure of arterial stiffness along with a reduction in aortic systolic blood pressure. In fact, individuals who were considered pre-hypertensive at the beginning of the study also showed significant reductions in diastolic blood pressure after supplementing with blueberry powder.

“Polyphenolic compounds exert a variety of physiologic effects...including antioxidative, vascular, and immunomodulatory effects,” the authors of the study write. “It's likely in vivo (in the body) anthocyanins and other polyphenolic compounds in blueberries work at the cellular level by modulating cell signaling processes.”



Although more research is needed, these results suggest polyphenols, like anthocyanins, may reduce damaging free radicals, which in turn could improve vascular function. Additionally, blueberry powder intake was found to increase nitric oxide—a molecule the body produces that dilates blood vessels, thereby regulating blood pressure.

Benefits associated with blueberry powder were not just limited to cardiovascular health. After six weeks of supplementation, those in the blueberry powder group saw an increase in Natural Killer (NK) cells—a type of immune cell responsible for the body’s response to viruses and abnormal tumor cell growth. Although the reason behind these results isn’t completely clear, it may show promise in the field of cancer prevention.

Enjoying the health benefits associated with blueberries shouldn’t be limited to a particular season. By trying whole foods based variations of this fruit, you can experience its goodness all year round.

REFERENCES

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