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# Eating Handful of Blueberries Daily May Improve Brain Function, Lower Blood Pressure

*Bel Marra Health*

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According to [recent studies](#), eating a handful of blueberries daily may improve brain function and lower blood pressure. New studies are providing compelling evidence that eating blueberries could be an easy way to improve long-term health, including physical and mental well-being.

One of the most recent studies touting blueberries' benefits was published in the *American Journal of Clinical Nutrition* and involved researchers from King's and the University of Reading. It analyzed the results of a randomized, double-blind, placebo-controlled trial of 61 healthy men and women aged 65 to 80 who consumed a beverage made with 26 grams of freeze-dried wild blueberry powder (the equivalent of about 178 grams of whole berries). The control group drank a matching placebo.

Over the 12 weeks, researchers found that participants who consumed the berry power had better memory and improved accuracy on attention tasks. They also had lower blood pressure compared to the placebo group. This blueberry group also had increased flow-mediated dilation (FMD), leading to a lower risk of

cardiovascular disease.

This study, the first of its kind, helps to bolster previous studies that suggested eating blueberries daily could help lower the risk of cardiovascular disease by lowering blood pressure and improving blood vessel function.

Previous studies had found potential advantages to consuming blueberries, but this study went further by analyzing how a certain amount of dietary blueberry consumption could benefit cognitive and cardiovascular health simultaneously.

Researchers believe the blue pigments in blueberries, called anthocyanins, are behind the effects. These polyphenols are noted antioxidants and are also present in other foods, such as raspberries, strawberries, red grapes, and purple vegetables.

“It’s clear from this study that consuming wild blueberries is beneficial to cognitive function and vascular health,” professor Claire Williams, chair of the neuroscience department at the University of Reading, said. “The group who had the wild blueberry powder showed signs of better memory and greater mental flexibility when completing cognitive tasks. This is consistent with what we already know about the health benefits of anthocyanin-rich foods. It points to an important role of polyphenols in healthy aging.”

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