

Blueberries found to reduce blood pressure and arterial stiffness



Just one cup of blueberries per day could be the key to reducing blood pressure and arterial stiffness, both of which are associated with cardiovascular disease.

"Our findings suggest that regular consumption of blueberries could potentially delay the progression of prehypertension to hypertension, therefore reducing cardiovascular disease risk," said Sarah A. Johnson, assistant director of the Center for Advancing Exercise and Nutrition Research on Aging and postdoctoral fellow in the Department of Nutrition, Food and Exercise Sciences at Florida State University.

"Once women go through menopause, this puts them at an even greater risk for it. Our findings suggest that the addition of a single food, blueberries, to the diet may mitigate the negative cardiovascular effects that often occur as a result of menopause."

Over an eight-week period, 48 postmenopausal women with pre- and stage-1 hypertension were randomly assigned to receive either 22 grams of freeze-dried blueberry powder - the equivalent to one cup of fresh blueberries - or 22 grams of a placebo powder.

At the beginning of the study, the team took participants' blood pressure and measured their arterial stiffness and select blood biomarkers.

At the end of the eight weeks, participants receiving the blueberry powder on average had a 7 mmHg decrease in systolic blood pressure, which is the top number in the blood pressure reading that measures the pressure in the arteries when the heart beats.

Daily blueberry consumption improves blood pressure and arterial stiffness in postmenopausal women with pre- and stage 1-hypertension: a randomized, double-blind, placebo-controlled clinical trial.

Johnson SA, Figueroa A, Navaei N, Wong A, Kalfon R, Ormsbee LT, Feresin RG, Elam ML, Hooshmand S, Payton ME, and Arjmandi BH.
Journal of the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics