

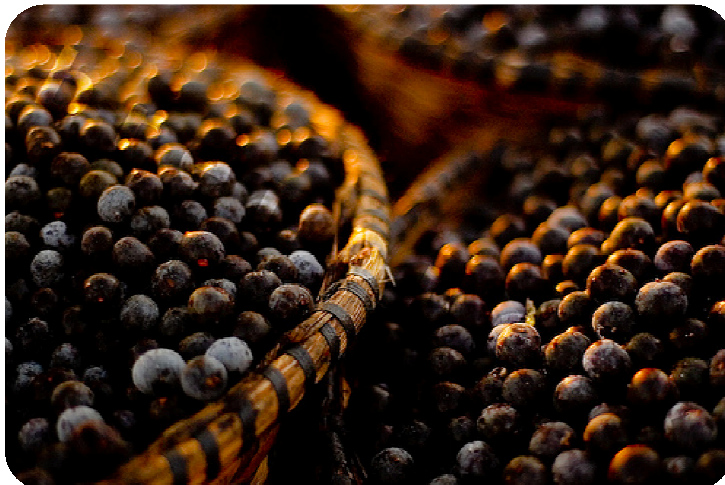


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## What is Acai?

The Acai Palm that thrives in the swamps and floodplains of Central and South America produces berries that create a refreshing beverage with numerous healthy qualities. With an interesting history, Acai berries have been boosting the health and sustaining inhabitants of the Amazon region for many centuries.

Decorating the branches of the Acai Palm, between 700 and 900 fruits are found. Acai berries are small and round, measuring about 1 inch in diameter. They carry a blackish-purple hue when ripe, highlighting an appearance and size much similar to a grape (with less pulp). Inside of the fruit, there is a large seed that constitutes a great deal of space within the fruit. The seeds usually measure about 7 to 10 millimeters in diameter. The harvesting of the Acai comes in waves of two crops per year.



## Typical Uses of Acai

While many individuals outside of the South American region tend to concentrate on the health benefits of Acai berries, there are many different uses for the fruit. The berries are often harvested as food, while the juice and pulp of the fruit regularly appear in a variety of juice blends, carbonated drinks, smoothies, and other beverages. In some parts of the Amazon, many regard the fruit as a major part of their diet.

A trip to northern Brazil introduces you to a traditional dish consisting of Acai berries, tapioca and sometimes sugar. In southern Brazil, the inhabitants eat their Acai cold, as they freeze and mash the palm fruit, which is then served similar to a sorbet – typically paired with cereals and other fruits like bananas.

Acai is not only consumed as food, but the Acai palm is a pretty resourceful item on the market. The berries have been used as a natural ink or dye. The leaves make attractive hats and baskets. Acai brooms are used to clean, while the leaves also create roof thatch for homes. The trunk wood is immune to pests, making it a hearty and durable construction material. The seeds are grown to feed livestock and also cultivate the growing of other plants by creating a nutrient-rich organic soil. Sometimes, the seeds are used to generate jewelry and souvenirs to boost tourism.

## Getting Acai

In order to experience the wealth of benefits associated with Acai, it is important to consume immediately after harvest, as the berries are known to spoil at a fast rate. The only way to enjoy raw Acai outside of the growing region is to purchase the juice or fruit pulp, which has been frozen or freeze-dried. Today, a handful of manufacturers now offer juices, frozen desserts, and other healthy beverages made with Acai berries (often blended with other fruits).



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## The Acai Superfood

Health professionals, doctors, and nutritionists often make suggestions on what their patients should do to boost their level of health and quality of life. A variety of dietary recommendations are made and patients later decide whether or not they will abide by the advice. Today, an increasing amount of individuals are taking the opinion of their doctors and now seek out the health benefits associated with what is known as a "superfood."



### What is a Superfood?

With the exception of chocolate, tea, and oatmeal – superfoods are mostly comprised of fruits and vegetables. Incorporating a variety of superfoods into a diet not only increases the level of nutrition, but also enhances overall health. One of the most commonly talked about superfood is the blueberry, which provides an abundance of antioxidants. In addition to this delicious berry, there are many other selections to consider when shopping for a superfood, including blackberries and raspberries.

In small doses, dark chocolate promotes a healthy heart and is considered one of the most indulgent of superfoods. Additionally, when combining more than one superfood creates what is known as "synergy," where the nutrients of one type of food helps to enhance the nutrients of another. Those who consume a wide-range of superfoods coupled with other items stand to reap the most benefits from antioxidants and other healthy components, such as omega fats.

### Acai Berries: Superfood Components

The health benefits associated with Acai berries go beyond a hearty supply of antioxidants. Acai contains a high level of anthocyanins, which protects food from harmful free radicals that develop as a result to UV light exposure and metabolic processes. Anthocyanins help conserve the level of antioxidants in foods and continue to do so after they are consumed. While red wine contains a high level of anthocyanins, Acai berries actually provide 10 to 30 times more.

Acai berries are rich in omega fats, offering a healthy dose of unsaturated fats including Omega-3, Omega-6, and Omega-9. The outstanding source of fiber within Acai berries may help combat colon cancer and improve regularity. For every 100 grams of Acai berries, nearly 45 grams of fiber are supplied. Acai berries serve as a desirable superfood because of the high content of amino acids and protein as well. The berries contain 19 different amino acids – the building blocks of the more than 8 grams of protein found in a 100-gram serving of Acai.

Acai berries also contain three different plant sterols (B-sitosterol, campesterol and stigmasterol), which help to keep a heart healthy, as well as assist proper digestive functions. An assortment of vitamins and minerals further elevates the superfood appeal of Acai berries with a decent amount of vitamins B1, B2, B3, C and E. Acai berries also supplies just as much vitamin C as another superfood – blueberries. For every 100 grams of Acai, one receives more than 1000 IU of Vitamin A. Additionally, those who consume this superfood will also benefit from the potassium, calcium, copper, magnesium, and zinc found in the impressive Acai berry.

## Acai Berries and ORAC

Over the years, Acai berries have been gaining quite a reputation due to the many benefits associated with a high level of antioxidants. Through the consumption of antioxidant-rich foods, one may combat fatigue, illness, and disease, including heart ailments, cancer, and other degenerative concerns. To better understand the health benefits associated with Acai berries, it is important to become familiar with ORAC values.

### What is ORAC?

The ability to control oxygen free radicals is expressed through an ORAC (Oxygen Radical Absorbance Capacity) number. Using test tube analysis, the ORAC number is assessed by the measurement of antioxidant activity for any given substance. Higher ORAC numbers means that a substance possesses stronger antioxidant powers. A variety of foods provide a high ORAC score, which includes Montgomery tart cherries, prunes, raisins, kale, spinach, cocoa, pomegranates, black raspberries, and Acai berries.

### Benefits of High ORAC Values

The buzz regarding foods with high ORAC values, such as Acai berries, has centered on early findings that revealed the consumption of many fruits and vegetables with high ORAC scores may slow down the oxidation process linked to aging. It is a belief that antioxidant-rich foods possess the power to ease the detrimental changes concerning the body and brain that are caused by aging. Many middle-aged and younger individuals have started to increase the number of high-ORAC foods included in their diet in hopes of combating the diseases and illnesses associated with getting older.

Additional benefits connected to high ORAC values include the chance to combat long-term memory loss; slow down the deterioration of learning ability; boost brain cell activity; and prevent oxygen damage in different parts of the body, such as the capillaries (tiny blood vessels).



### The ORAC Number of Acai Berries

In order to reap the benefits of antioxidants, a diet high in foods showcasing a high ORAC number is suggested. Fruits and vegetables are often assigned a high ORAC number. The USDA suggests a daily intake of 3,000 to 5,000 ORAC units. Unfortunately, the typical person in the United States is only consuming less than 1,000 ORAC units per day. In actuality, the recommended "5-a-day" fruit and vegetable requirement established by the USDA generally delivers an ORAC score of 1,750 units.

Common fruit favorites, such as the apple and banana respectively provide an ORAC score of 218 and 221. The blueberry is considered one of the healthiest berries in the world and offers an ORAC score of 2,400. However, when it comes to fresh Acai, the fruit holds an impressive ORAC score of 5,500. If you are lucky enough to get your hands on freeze-dried organic Acai, you may take advantage of an ORAC value nearing 35,000 per 100 grams.



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## Acai Berries and Anthocyanins

Acai berries are known to possess a wealth of desirable components that aids an individual's quest in becoming healthier, stronger, and motivated during activity. While the high levels of antioxidants found in the fruit are one of the most talked-about characteristics, there are many other components that create beneficial results in the body. One of the lesser-known advantages associated with Acai berries are called anthocyanins – the flavonoid pigments responsible for the vibrant colors of fruits and flowers.



### What are Anthocyanins?

Without anthocyanins, plants, fruits, and flowers would not display the brilliant shades of red, blue, and purple. These pigments are also responsible for much more, including serving as "sunscreens" for plants and making fruits seem more attractive to eat, as seen with a shiny red apple. In the wild, it is this boost in appearance that aids in the spreading of seeds when animals are encouraged to eat appealing-looking foods. In Acai berries, anthocyanins also carry their own set of antioxidant properties.

Additional foods containing a high level of anthocyanins include black currants, chokeberries, eggplant, red cabbage, oranges, blackberry, raspberries, cherries, red currants, and red grapes. In each and every item listed, the bright coloring of reds, blues, purples, and oranges are caused by the amount of anthocyanins they contain. A few foods that offer a low amount of anthocyanins include potatoes, pears, fennel, peas, bananas, and asparagus.

Outside of food, an unusually high amount of anthocyanins found in the plant world is responsible for cultivating a variety of good-looking species of ornamental plants.

### The Importance of Anthocyanins

A variety of health benefits are associated with anthocyanins – proven through many recent studies. Over the years, scientists have concluded that foods high in anthocyanins have the power to work against cancer, diabetes, bacterial infections, inflammation, the aging process, as well as neurological diseases.

Some of the most advanced research has been focused on cancer tumor development, which became affected by anthocyanins in both the initial and progressive stages. Anthocyanin- rich foods, such as Acai berries, have inhibited the growth of tumor cells by slowing down the growth of pre-malignant cells; increasing cell turnover rates that effectively destroy cancer cells at a faster rate, lessening the damage of inflammation; suppressing the growth of new blood vessels that provide nourishment for tumors, and minimizing the overall damage caused by cancer.



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## **Anthocyanins and Acai Berries**

When fruits, such as Acai berries, are exposed to beaming rays of sunshine, stress occurs due to a high level of UV (ultraviolet) light. It is this kind of light that encourages the formation of free radicals, which in abundance becomes rather damaging. Acai berries contain high levels of anthocyanins, which translate into very powerful antioxidants that combat the unwanted effects of free radicals. This influence is able to take place even after someone has eaten the berries.

Joining Acai berries in high antioxidant and anthocyanin levels are other fruits that display a brightly colored pigmentation. One of the most notable kinds of foods to consider adding to a diet includes fruits and vegetables displaying red skins and tissues, known as a highly nutritious food source.



## **Acai Berries – the Antioxidant Food**

While many people are singing the praises of Acai berries, many are puzzled as to what exactly makes this fruit such an important part in the diets of inhabitants throughout the Amazon region. With an assortment of healthy properties, the berries of the Acai possess a great deal of antioxidants – molecules that slow down or prevent the process of oxidation of other molecules.

### **What Are Antioxidants?**

Oxidation is the chemical reaction associated with the transfer of electrons from one substance to an oxidizing agent. Through the process, substances called free radicals develop, which are responsible for the chain reactions that cause cell damage. While normal amounts of free radicals help break down toxins and combat disease, an overabundance leads to an imbalance in the body that causes stress. It is the duty of antioxidants to eliminate the harmful chain reactions within the body caused by too many free radicals.

To better understand oxidation, you may consider some of the common occurrences that involve this process. Oxidation takes place when leaving cut apples on a plate only to find they have turned brown after a couple of hours. Oxidation occurs when a metal object left outside is exposed to rain and becomes rusty. These examples illustrate what happens when this particular chemical reaction takes place, which also occurs within the body when substances break down.

### **The Benefits of Antioxidants**

A diet that contains foods high in antioxidants helps balance out the body and fights the damage that causes medical problems, such as diabetes, cancer, and atherosclerosis. It has been proven that people who consume a decent amount of antioxidants face a lower risk of heart disease and some diseases of the neurological system. Some studies have shown promise in preventing macular degeneration (thinning of the eye) and aiding a weakened immune system.





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Antioxidants are also seen as a way to regenerate the body after a session of heavy physical activity, such as exercising. The increase in oxygen consumption is known to heighten the production of oxidants, which leads to damaged cells. This often translates into muscular fatigue that occurs during and after physical activity. Consuming high levels of antioxidants helps the body repair and recuperate at a faster rate, promoting enriched responses of the body, muscles, and tissues in regards to future exercise. Additionally, a lower incidence of disease and injury often takes place.

Antioxidant-rich foods usually contain vitamins, such as E, C, and carotene. Minerals, such as copper, zinc, selenium, and manganese are also included. The level of antioxidants in foods tends to register higher in items with bright colors, such as orange, red, blue, and purple. This is why Acai berries are considered quite influential when it comes to delivering a healthy boost.

## Acai Berries – Antioxidant Rich

To measure the level of antioxidants contained in Acai berries, one must take a look at the ORAC (Oxygen Radical Absorbance Capacity) number of the fruit. This assessment measures the capacity of a substance to suppress oxygen free radicals within a test tube analysis. With a USDA recommendation of 3,000 to 5,000 ORAC units per day, the "5-a-day" fruits and vegetables suggestion usually totals an ORAC score of 1,750. The commonly eaten apple and banana respectively score 218 and 221. One of the healthiest berries in the world – blueberries – carries an ORAC score of 2,400. Fresh Acai possesses an astonishing ORAC score of 5,500 with freeze-dried Acai reaching unimaginable levels per 100 grams.



## Acai Health Benefits

With a high level of antioxidants and other beneficial components, consuming Acai is good for your health. Today, the market offers a range of Acai products with varying levels of potency and effects. With a high amount of "good" fats, fiber, amino acids, protein, vitamins, minerals, and plant sterols – products containing Acai are connected with many desirable health benefits, including boosting heart health and maintaining important organs, muscles, and tissues.

## Maintains Overall Body Health

The maintenance of important bodily functions and organs is seen through the presence of numerous vitamins and minerals contained in Acai. The fruit provides consumers with

vitamins A, B1, B2, B3, C and E. Acai also decreases the "bad" cholesterol in the body, while upping the level of "good" cholesterol. When using different parts of the Acai palm, many diseases and conditions including anemia, malaria, menstrual pain, liver ailments, and fever, become treatable through a natural approach.



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## **Encourages Radiant Skin and Hair Health**

One may also benefit from the potassium, magnesium, copper, calcium, and zinc within Acai, which is great for healthy bones, heart, and other parts of the body. For every 100 grams of Acai, there is more than 1,000 IU of vitamin A, which enhances the moisture and health of skin.

## **Provides Energy Boost**

The contents of Acai are known to increase the energy levels in those who consume the fruit and its products. The libido and stamina of an individual also benefits, as Acai products offer healthy fats, such as omega-3 and omega-6. When compared to milk, the Acai berry is known to promote four times the energy with a healthy dose of lipids, carbohydrates, iron, and vitamin B1.

## **Improves Immunity**

The immune system receives a boost when one consumes Acai products, as a collection of health-enhancing components is found in the fruit. For example, Acai contains just as much vitamin C as blueberries – a well-known superfood.

## **Refreshes the Body, Mind, and Spirit**

Acai possesses a great deal of fiber (44.2 grams per 100 grams of Acai), which aids in the cleansing effects of the body, as well as the rejuvenation of the mind and spirit. The fiber contained in the fruit also helps to combat certain types of cancer, as well as improve regularity. The omega fats in Acai aid in fighting bouts of depression. The Acai berry is also linked with slowing down the aging process and increasing longevity through the high concentration of antioxidants.

## **Offers Anti-Inflammatory Properties**

Those who suffer health conditions, such as rheumatism and other types of arthritis may benefit from an Acai supplement, as the fruit possesses the power to combat inflammation.

## **Promotes a Healthy Heart**

Plant sterols, such as B-sitosterol and campesterol are part of the Acai berry, which in many health studies has proven positive for those aiming to improve the health of their heart or enhance digestive function.

In conclusion, Acai provides many health benefits that span the lowering of blood cholesterol to an improvement in energy levels to the rejuvenation of tired skin. With 19 different amino acids and a healthy dose of omega fats, a satisfying range of possibilities is attached to the amazing Acai fruit.





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## Beat Swine Flu By Improving Your Immune System With Acai Berries



Swine flu has hit pandemic levels. That have been outbreaks of it occurring around the globe, with a rising death toll. The World Health Organization has rated it one of the most serious outbreaks of contagious illness in the last few decades, and considers it a major threat.

But it is not just the initial outbreak that needs to be worried about. The swine flu virus has the capability of combining genetic material with other flu viruses to create whole new outbreaks. Experts consider a 2nd 'wave' of illnesses likely, whilst any vaccines are still awhile away and will need to be tailored to any additional outbreaks.

So it becomes a case of fighting against catching swine flu in the first place. Common sense must rule

here. Washing hands, avoiding those who are ill and making sure that our immune systems are at full capacity.

Whilst the first two are the ones that most people consider, many are unsure on how to strengthen their immune system, what works and what doesn't.

### **Acai berries are the answer here**

It is important to turn to medically recognized ways of improving immune system, not just rely on hear-say and urban myths. The main method of improving your immune system is to ensure that you have a strong, steady supply of antioxidants. It is these antioxidants that strengthen immune systems and help you fight off viruses.

The best known source of antioxidants is the Acai berry, containing far more than red wine, grapes, blueberries and other 'antioxidant rich' foods. By acquiring a reliable source of Acai berry supplements you are able to ensure a regular supply of antioxidants to boost the immune system and help you fight off any flu infections, swine or otherwise.

Antioxidants aren't the only way that Acai berries can help strengthen your immune system, and therefore improve your chances of not contracting the deadly swine flu. Acai berries also contain huge concentrations of vitamins and minerals – and these nutrients are vital to keeping the immune system in the top possible condition.

It is important to remember that the immune system isn't simply one organ, but a collection of organs, bacteria and systems that come together to protect the body. The most important first line of defence against illness is your skin. The high levels of vitamin B within Acai berries strengthen the skin and ensure that it is ready to repulse viral infections.





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The immune system is often attacked from within. The average human body holds over 10lbs in waste in their colon, waste that is compacted and unmoving. This provides an ideal breeding ground for bacteria and viruses. This constant attack from within the body stretches the resources of the immune system, taxing it, making it vulnerable to outside illnesses such as swine flu.

Acai berry's high fiber content helps to expel this compacted waste, removing a dangerous threat to the body and reducing the calls upon the immune systems resources.

It is important that you give yourself the best possible chance of avoiding catching swine flu. Acai berry supplements play a massive role in keeping you and your loved ones safe and sound



## How to Choose an Acai Supplement

While enjoying fresh Acai berries outside of the Amazon is impossible and frozen Acai presents portable limitations, manufacturers use other ways to supplement Acai to the rest of the world. In addition to the commonly produced Acai berry powder supplement, other methods of production (spray-dried and extracts) are also available for purchase yet tend to carry less-than-desirable results.

Overall, freeze-dried Acai contains one of the highest ORAC scores – 34,000 for every 100 grams of powder – which far exceeds the score of 5,500 in fresh Acai of the same weight. You should take note that one gram of freeze-dried powder is equivalent to around six grams of fresh Acai berry.

### Spray Dried Acai Supplements

Depending on the company supplying Acai products, you may encounter a supplement that offers spray-dried Acai. Through a process of heating Acai berries at high temperatures, water is eliminated. Next, a spraying of the Acai with substances (such as maltodextrin) takes place.

In the end, a less-than-satisfying supplement is the result.

For starters, consumers receive fewer nutrients because of the destructive properties of high temperatures. Additionally, the drying of the Acai using other substances taints the potency of the final product, which will contain high amounts of other ingredients. Usually, a spray dried Acai supplement claiming to contain 500mg of Acai per capsule typically delivers only 300mg of actual Acai.



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## **Acai Extracts**

On the market, Acai extracts are sometimes encountered. The very concept of an extract of Acai is defeating, as consumers are interested in benefiting from the whole berry and not just an extract of the fruit. Also, many extracts are made with spray-dried Acai, which showcases an ORAC value less than 50 times that of freeze-dried products. Even if a label states phrases, such as "4:1" or "super-concentrated," continue to ignore, as freeze-dried Acai provides the best of the whole Acai berry.

## **Freeze-dried Organic Acai Supplements**

In order to take advantage of high-quality Acai supplements, company selection does make a difference. Typical reviews of our current recommendations mention their amazement in the boost of energy and improved immune system that comes with usage. Plus, as all our recommendations always use Fair Trade Acai, the harvesting of the Acai has not only helped lessen the damaging effects of clear-cutting Amazon rainforests, but also offered the workers a fair wage for them and their families.

In conclusion, as you scan the many different Acai supplements on the market, it is important to buy products distributed by reputable companies known to produce safe and nutritious items. As a rule of thumb, it is suggested to analyze the ingredients and warnings decorating the labels of any supplement. The inexpensive price tag attached to spray-dried Acai products and extracts may seem appealing, but the final results are very much inferior to freeze-dried Acai powders. To get the most out of an Acai supplement, it is suggested to keep an eye out for labels that identifies the product as Freeze Dried, Organic and Fair Trade.

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