



Açaí

(Ah-Sigh-Ee)

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Nutrition Guide

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Açaí Berry Diet, Weight Loss & Nutrition

Firstly, the Açaí berry isn't some "magic key" to weight loss. It's not an "amazing weight loss secret from the Amazon" that will cause you to lose "20 pounds in one week" as some marketing hype from overseas might try to lead you to believe. Ever since the Açaí berry diet was mentioned on Oprah, crazy products and claims are popping up everywhere. Don't be duped into any of the free trials or network marketing products which are overpriced and may not deliver the results they promise.

The claims they make are rarely backed by scientific studies and proper research. Like the old saying goes, if it sounds too good to be true it probably is.

However, combined with proper diet and exercise, the Açaí berry can be an excellent weight loss aid. It's natural combination of antioxidants, dietary fibre, carbohydrates, essential fatty acids, amino acids, phytosterols, vitamins and minerals work together to help your body function better, process food easier, and burn fat more efficiently. Let's break down how these parts of the Açaí berry could aid people in reaching their perfect weight...

Boosting your metabolism

If you skip breakfast, your metabolism slows down to conserve the little energy you have left from the overnight fast, which means that your body will want to store anything you consume later in the day. Research shows that by eating a balanced and complete breakfast you can kick-start your metabolism, and fill yourself up so you are less likely to make unhealthy meal choices later in the day. It will also give you energy to function. A complete Rio smoothie containing Açaí will provide you with the goodness of a balanced breakfast.

Gut healthy fibre to aid digestion & suppress appetite

A high fibre diet (approximately 30-40g per day) reduces your risk of chronic disease such as diabetes, heart disease and some types of cancer. It is also a great way to help you feel full quicker and lose weight. Fibre acts like a sponge and soaks up sugar in the foods you eat, and releases it slowly, helping control blood sugar levels. It also reduces cholesterol absorption and excretion, therefore reducing your blood cholesterol and your risk of heart disease. This sponge effect will also make you feel fuller and therefore eat less, and also be less likely to make unhealthy meal choices.

Antioxidants - fight free radicals & oxidative damage

There is consistent evidence in research that diets rich in fruit, vegetables and other plant foods are associated with lower rates of obesity, and lower mortality rates from cardiovascular disease and some types of cancer. This association is partly given to the

high level of antioxidants in fruits and vegetables, which protect our bodies against chronic disease by decreasing free radical oxidative damage. Free radicals are a common by-product of normal metabolism and stresses to our body such as pollution, exposure to the sun, exercise, smoking and poor diet. Açai is rich in anthocyanins, a type of phytosterol, giving it the characteristic deep purple colour. The food industry is now labeling antioxidants in food with ORAC (Oxygen Radical Absorbance Capacity). Data from the US Department of Agriculture suggests a serving of fresh fruit and vegetables has 850-2,500 ORAC units. One 5g serving of Organic freeze dried Açai will provide you with around 4,695 ORAC units!

Heart friendly nutrients

We know that proper diet can help reduce heart risk, even if you have risk factors which cannot change (such as age, genetics and family history). A heart friendly diet not only protects us from heart disease, it also protects against adult-onset diabetes, cancer and obesity. One of the key aspects is the inclusion of fruits and vegetables and the replacement of saturated fat in the diet by unsaturated fats. Numerous research studies have shown such a diet can reduce heart disease and stroke by 25%, and it is believed that it's the abundance of antioxidants which protect the LDL (bad cholesterol) from oxidizing, which is what forms plaque in our arteries and hence artery hardening or atherosclerosis. Açai is naturally cholesterol free, low in saturated fats, and high in the unsaturated fats omega-6 and omega-9 which reduce LDL-cholesterol (bad cholesterol) levels. Açai is also richer in monounsaturated fats than polyunsaturated fats, which maintain the good HDL-cholesterol levels. A synergy of monounsaturated (healthy) fats, dietary fibre and antioxidants help the cardiovascular system and digestive tract.

Increased Energy & Stamina

What does Açai have that gives you sustained energy throughout the day? Carbohydrates and fibre. Carbohydrates, when digested, release sugar into our blood. The measure of the extent of the sugar rise is called the Glycemic Index (GI). The lower the GI, the slower the food is digested and absorbed, producing a gradual rise in blood sugar levels. RioLife Açai pulp has a glycemic load (GL) of 0.5. GL gives a fuller picture than GI alone, since it considers the amount of carbohydrate consumed. A GL of 10 or less is considered low, therefore helping control blood sugar levels and lowering the risk of type 2 diabetes and heart disease. The dietary fibre acts like a sponge and helps to slow down digestion, which may help prevent weight gain and therefore your risk of obesity. Unlike most juices, most of Açai's kilo joules (energy) come not from sugar, but from the good unsaturated omega-6 and omega-9 fats. This is one juice you can feel great about drinking!

Vitamins & Minerals

Vitamin E - A fat soluble vitamin which has antioxidant properties. It protects our cells from oxidation, and prevents healthy unsaturated fats from oxidation as well.

Iron - An essential mineral needed by many cells in our bodies, including red blood cells, to carry oxygen.

Calcium - Needed for our bones and teeth to develop properly, for their maintenance, and for our muscles and heart to function.

Magnesium - A mineral needed for our bodies to produce energy, also helping regulate potassium and calcium. Important in bone formation and muscles.

Phosphorus - Part of our DNA, cell membranes and enzymes, it is needed to maintain bones and teeth and in energy metabolism.

Athlete fuel

Any person who engages in physical activity needs to maintain a fuel and nutrient-rich diet. Foods which provide our bodies with fuel to perform are rich in carbohydrates.

Training whilst low on carbohydrates will make you feel tired and make work outs ineffective. Açai is a nutritious carbohydrate rich food. Calcium that helps maintain bone health and muscle contraction, and iron to help your body circulate oxygen.

Exercise also depletes our bodies of essential salts and minerals. Eating Açai after a workout provides your body with a good combination of carbohydrate, protein, fats and minerals. The last benefit for athletes is the high antioxidant content. Exercise equals stress in our bodies, which translates into an increase in free radicals. Açai's antioxidants help our bodies with the high stress our tissues experience with exercise.

Final note on Açai

Although it's not the miracle weight loss solution that some claim, the Açai berry has been medically and scientifically proven to contain ingredients that aid in weight loss and general nutrition.

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