



Taken from: www.care2.com/greenliving/8-beet-benefits-aphrodisiac-brain-booster-more.html

A single serving of beets can boost your energy and lower your blood pressure. Eating beets long-term can help you fight cancer, reduce arthritic pain, and lose weight, as well as assisting in a number of other health areas. Many people don't like beets or consider it only a special occasion dish, but we think this powerfood should be on your plate every day.

Health Benefits

Weight Loss:

Beets taste sweet, but a cup of cooked beet contains only 60 calories and is full of fiber. This is a perfect food for weight management. The sugars in beets are smart carbs, since they come in a natural whole food form. Unlike white sugar, the beet calories come with a lot of nutrients and phytochemicals.

Brain and Energy Boost:

Beets are high in natural nitrates, which are converted to nitric oxide in the body. Nitric oxide is known to expand the walls of blood vessels so you can enjoy more oxygen, more nutrients, and more energy. Studies have shown nitric oxide to increase the efficiency of the mitochondria (your energy powerhouses). The results of these studies were impressive.

- A single small serving (70 ml) of beetroot juice reduced resting blood pressure by 2%.
- A single small serving *increased* the length of time professional divers could hold their breath by 11%.
- Cyclists who drank a single larger serving (500 ml) of beetroot juice were able to ride up to 20% longer.



Nature's Viagra:

One of the first known uses of beets was by the ancient Romans, who used them medicinally as an aphrodisiac. Many plants have been considered an aphrodisiac by some culture at some time, but in this case it may be more than just wishful thinking. As noted above, beets can increase blood flow due to their nitrates. Increased blood flow to the genital areas is one of the mechanisms Viagra and other pharmaceuticals create their effects. Beets also contain high amounts of boron, which is directly related to the production of human sex hormones.

Super Antioxidant for a Long, Healthy, and Pain-Free Life:

Antioxidants help to reverse the daily accumulated wear and tear on the body, known as aging. Beets are a very good source of commonly known antioxidants like vitamin C and manganese, but it is their lesser-known antioxidants which give them their true value. The blood-red color of beets comes from a powerful group of antioxidants called betalains. There are hundreds of studies on the positive health benefits of betalains. A short summary of the results shows that they help in the areas of cancer, heart disease, diabetes, and inflammation. If you go to Google Scholar and type in 'betalains,' you will see 3790 scholarly references on this subject.

Anti-Inflammatory Benefits:

The inflammatory response is a natural function of the body which saves our lives when it responds to the acute stresses in our lives, like bacterial infection and injury. Due to the constant stress in our modern lives, however, this inflammation becomes chronic. The blood-red betalains in beets have been shown to reduce chronic inflammation. It is as though our body is constantly in a battle. Inflammation has been linked to a number of symptoms and diseases including:

- Wrinkles
- Susceptibility to infections
- Cancer
- Arthritis
- Bronchitis
- Chronic pain
- Diabetes
- High blood pressure
- Osteoporosis
- Heart disease
- Candidiasis

Cancer Prevention:

Preliminary tests suggest that beetroot ingestion can be one of the useful means to prevent lung and skin cancer. Other studies have shown that beet juice inhibits the formation of cancer-causing compounds called nitrosamines.

Cell Detoxification and Cleansing:

The antioxidants in beets have been shown to support what is called phase 2 cleansing. In phase 2 cleansing, unwanted toxic substances are chemically combined with a small nutrient group. This combination neutralizes the toxin and makes them sufficiently water-soluble so they can be excreted through the urine. This is therefore deep cleansing on a cellular level that may have long term health benefits.

Improved Mental Health:

The betalains in beets has been used in certain treatments of depression. It also contains tryptophan, which relaxes the mind and creates a sense of well-being, similar to chocolate. Enjoy!