



Vinegar – The Magic Elixir?

By Dr. John Mamana

Miracle cure. Fountain of youth. We've all heard outrageous claims of the one thing that will make us healthier, happier, skinnier or sexier. Is there such a thing?

Some would lay claim that apple cider vinegar is that cure all. As far back as 400 BC, vinegar has been used as a food, a home remedy, and a medicine for both people and pets. It has even been noted that Hippocrates, the father of modern medicine used vinegar and vinegar mixed with honey as a healing tonic.

Today, vinegar supporters assert it can achieve everything from preventing diabetes and heart disease to promoting weight loss and slowing aging. With such sensational claims, one would assume more scientific research is available. Unfortunately, a lack of scientific studies is often the case for alternative medicine. While the National Center for Complementary and Alternative Medicine (NCCAM) – a division of the U.S. government's National Institutes of Health-was created to investigate natural or unconventional therapies that hold promise. It has not published any studies about vinegar, even though there is a renewed interest in vinegar's healing benefits.

Because vinegar is high in acetic acid, it can increase the body's absorption of important minerals from the foods we eat. So adding vinegar to daily meals by splashing it on salads or veggies, or drinking about a tablespoon of vinegar mixed with water just before or with meals will help you absorb the essential minerals from food.

Vinegar is also great for women working to manage osteoporosis. While dairy and dark, leafy greens are good sources of calcium, the acetic acid in vinegar will allow the body to absorb one-third more calcium from green vegetables than it would without the aid of vinegar.

As for the treatment of diabetes, the American Diabetes Association's publication "Diabetes Care" indicates that vinegar has potential for helping people with diabetes. Their 2004 study shows that people with type 2 diabetes who took vinegar with meals were better able to manage the hormone insulin and control blood sugar levels, which helps to ward off



diabetes complications, such as nerve damage and blindness. Vinegar increased overall insulin sensitivity 34 percent in the study participants who were insulin-resistant and 19 percent in those with type 2 diabetes.

Added to the finding of insulin management for diabetes, recent medical research has linked levels of insulin to weight loss. Because vinegar slows the rise of blood sugar after a meal, the belief is that vinegar taken with meals will subsequently reduce the amount of insulin required to process the meal, ultimately leading to weight loss. Some vinegar research also indicates that the nutrients, enzymes, and organic acids in vinegar cause weight reduction by acting as an appetite suppressant as well as increasing the metabolic rate.

Finding alternative options for better health is one of Executive MD's primary objectives. If you are interested in more dietary options, set an appointment today.

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