

What are the health benefits of balsamic vinegar?

By Jenna Fletcher | Last reviewed Thu 24 May 2018

Reviewed by Natalie Olsen, RD, LD, ACSM EP-C

Balsamic vinegar is a popular ingredient in salad dressings, marinades, and many other foods. It has a distinctive flavor that is often described as bold, tart, and complex.

Some studies suggest that balsamic vinegar has additional health benefits, ranging from improving a person's complexion to lowering cholesterol and aiding weight loss.

In this article, we look at the potential health benefits of balsamic vinegar and the scientific research that may give them weight.

Ten health benefits of balsamic vinegar

The health benefits of balsamic vinegar may include the following:

1. Improving skin health

Balsamic vinegar contains antimicrobial compounds, acetic acid, and antioxidants. These components may help improve a person's complexion over time.

Other clear vinegars have been topically applied to the skin to help clear up acne. Balsamic vinegar can cause stains, however, so should not be applied directly to the skin.

2. Reducing blood sugar

Balsamic vinegar helps regulate blood sugar when eaten as part of a meal.

One review that examined the scientific effects of vinegar found that balsamic vinegar has an antiglycemic impact when consumed, meaning a person's blood sugar will spike less drastically after a meal.

The review indicated that vinegar could help create a blood sugar plateau for a period of up to 5 hours following a meal.



Studies suggest that this popular salad dressing ingredient has a number of health benefits.

3. Promoting healthy digestion

Acetic acid is the active compound in balsamic vinegar. This acid contains strains of probiotics that aid digestion.

The probiotics found in acetic acid can help promote good gut health and digestion while supporting overall immune function.

4. Lowering cholesterol

Balsamic vinegar may help lower cholesterol. The antioxidants in balsamic vinegar help block toxic cells in the body that can raise cholesterol levels.

According to one study, involving rabbits with high cholesterol, it is possible that consuming balsamic vinegar can help lower or maintain already low cholesterol levels.

5. Losing weight

The probiotics in balsamic vinegar can also help make a person feel full for longer.

Some research indicates that people may consume fewer calories throughout the day when they add vinegar to their morning meal.

6. Treating wounds

Balsamic vinegar has been used for many years to help treat wounds. It is suggested that balsamic vinegar has antifungal, antiviral, and antibacterial properties. These claims have not been well studied, however.

7. Reducing hypertension

One study, although again involving rats, determined that balsamic vinegar may help lower blood pressure. This research suggested that regularly adding balsamic vinegar to foods could help reduce high blood pressure over time.

This may be true if a person replaces fatty foods, such as butter and oil, with vinegar, thus lowering the total amount of fats they consume.



Consuming balsamic vinegar may help a person feel fuller for longer.

8. Relieving congestion

Some people use balsamic vinegar to help treat congestion. To do this, a person can add a few drops of vinegar to steaming water and breathe in the vapor.

9. Reducing acid reflux

People can try using balsamic vinegar to help reduce acid reflux or heartburn.

This remedy may not work for everyone, so it is a good idea to try it in small amounts and wait several hours to see whether it makes symptoms better or worse.

10. Promoting blood circulation

Balsamic vinegar is derived from grapes. Studies have found that grapes may help prevent cardiac disease by preventing platelets from building up in blood vessels.

Balsamic vinegar also contains polyphenols. Researchers are exploring how polyphenols aid in blood circulation, but the evidence is inconclusive so far.

RELATED ARTICLE



Is apple cider vinegar good for losing weight?

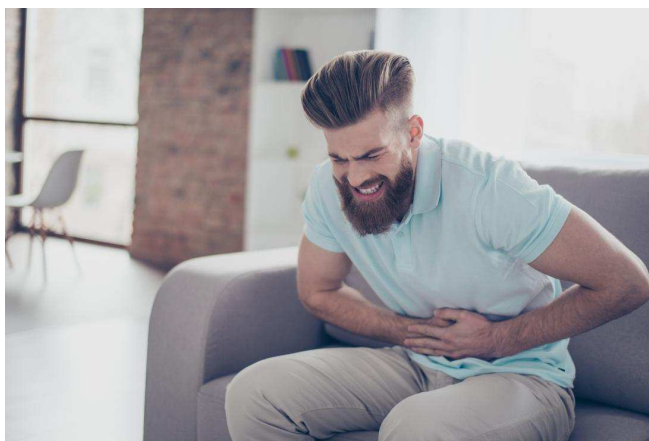
Apple cider vinegar is another common household ingredient with a wealth of health benefits. Learn more about whether it can help a person lose weight.

READ NOW

Risks

There are few risks to using balsamic vinegar, as it is generally safe to consume unless a person has an allergy. Possible risks include:

- upset stomach from consuming too much
- inflammation of the throat
- damage to the food pipe from drinking too much



Consuming too much balsamic vinegar may cause an upset stomach.

A person should limit their intake to about 2 tablespoons or less, as drinking too much can cause an upset stomach and other issues.

People should pay careful attention to the label of the balsamic vinegar they buy. Genuine balsamic may be expensive but does not contain added sugars. Other brands may contain additional sugars to help match the taste of genuine balsamic vinegar.

Summary

Balsamic vinegar is usually safe to add to foods. It contains very few calories, is low in sugar, and is fat-free.

In addition, there are several potential health benefits associated with balsamic vinegar. Though more research is still needed to understand these benefits, a person can feel good about making balsamic vinegar a part of a healthful diet.

People can find balsamic vinegar in most grocery stores or health food stores, as well as online.

References

Additional information

Article last reviewed by Thu 24 May 2018.

Visit our Nutrition / Diet category page for the latest news on this subject, or sign up to our newsletter to receive the latest updates on Nutrition / Diet.

All references are available in the **References** tab.

Citations

Please use one of the following formats to cite this article in your essay, paper or report:

MLA

Fletcher, Jenna. "What are the health benefits of balsamic vinegar?." *Medical News Today*. MediLexicon, Intl., 24 May. 2018. Web.
10 Oct. 2019. <<https://www.medicalnewstoday.com/articles/321906.php>>

APA

Fletcher, J. (2018, May 24). "What are the health benefits of balsamic vinegar?." *Medical News Today*. Retrieved from
<https://www.medicalnewstoday.com/articles/321906.php>.

Please note: If no author information is provided, the source is cited instead.

This page was printed from: <https://www.medicalnewstoday.com/articles/321906.php>

Visit www.medicalnewstoday.com for medical news and health news headlines posted throughout the day,
every day.

2019 Healthline Media UK Ltd. All rights reserved. MNT is the registered trade mark of Healthline Media. Any
medical information published on this website is not intended as a substitute for informed medical advice
and you should not take any action before consulting with a healthcare professional.