



Açaí

(Ah-Sigh-Ee)

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Nutrition Guide

Independent author: Flavia Fayet
from www.nutriesca.com.au - info@nutriesca.com.au

Flavia Fayet has completed her Masters of Nutrition and Dietetics at the University of Sydney, and is currently working on her PHD. She is a respected Dietician and lecturer at Sydney University.
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Açaí (pronounced Ah-Sigh-Ee) is a fruit packed with an amazing range of nutritional and health benefits. This small berry from the Brazilian Amazon is so packed with essential nutrients that it's in a nutritional class of its own! For this very reason, this guide will help you understand more about what Açaí has to offer and how it may improve your overall health when incorporated into your daily diet.

1. Antioxidants

The Açaí berry is not your regular fruit. One of the reasons for this is its high **antioxidant** content. You have probably heard over and over that there is consistent evidence in research that diets rich in fruit and vegetables and other plant foods are associated with lower mortality rates and lower death rates from cardiovascular disease and some types of cancer. Sound familiar? Probably. So why is that?

This association is partly given to the high content of **antioxidants** in fruits and vegetables, which protect our bodies against chronic disease by decreasing **free radical** oxidative damage. Our bodies are in constant attack by free radicals, which are a common by-product of normal metabolism. In our day to day lives, we are further exposed to high amounts of free radicals through increased physical activity, stress, pollutants, chemicals and toxins. Antioxidants which are obtained through our diet act like scavengers, which seek and "relax" the free radicals. Once the free radicals are "relaxed", they do no further damage.

So what kinds of antioxidants are in Açaí?

Açaí is rich in **anthocyanins**, compounds that provide colour to the fruits and serve as natural antioxidants. Those are the same compounds found in red wine. However, Açaí pulp has 10-30 times more. Organic Freeze dried Açaí contains more, 70-210 times more!

Açaí's royal purple pigment not only makes the fruit appealing to eat, but studies have shown that berry anthocyanins are beneficial in reducing age-associated oxidative stress (or the free radical damage). If berries can combat premature aging with 25 to 40 times less antioxidants than Açaí, then just imagine what organic freeze dried Açaí can do!

The US food industry is now labeling the antioxidants in food with ORAC (Oxygen Radical Absorbance Capacity). Data from the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) suggests a serving of fresh fruit and vegetables has between 890 and 2,500 ORAC units. Just one 5g serving of organic freeze dried Açaí will provide you with around 4,695 ORAC units!

2. A great start to your day

How can you improve your mental and physical performance and at the same time control your weight?

A smoothie with organic freeze dried Açaí first thing in the morning! Many of us skip breakfast and that is not good news. Having a good breakfast is one of the simplest ways

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to improve your overall health. Research shows that people who consume breakfast are leaner and maintain their weight compared to those who skip breakfast. If you skip breakfast, your metabolism slows down to conserve the little energy you have left from the overnight fast, which means that anything and everything that you consume later in the day, your body will want to store right away! By having a balanced and complete breakfast, you'll kick start your metabolism. Not only will your metabolism become more efficient during the day, but it will prevent you from being too hungry and making less healthy food choices at your next meal. It will also give you energy to function, meaning that you get more out of your day and feel great!

So if you find that you are not at your peak and you skip breakfast, why not try an Açaí smoothie for a change? Or a scoop of organic freeze dried Açaí with yoghurt and/or cereal? If you're short on time, just throw a few scoops in a tub of yoghurt and mix it up. In one serving you'll get the goodness of fibre, antioxidants, carbohydrates, and healthy unsaturated fats plus vitamins and minerals to help your body function.

3. Gut-healthy fiber

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 your blood sugar levels. It also reduces cholesterol absorption and excretion, therefore reducing your blood cholesterol and your risk of heart disease. But that's not all. Foods that are high in fibre expand in your stomach and intestine like a sponge, to help you feel full, and these foods tend to be those low in energy.

Açaí can help you bulk up your diet with fibre, and therefore decrease its energy density. This way you'll be eating less energy for the same weight of food and therefore help prevent weight gain and your risk of obesity! Organic freeze dried Açaí has a relatively high fibre content of 1.35g (per 5g serve) compared with an apple (1.8g) or a weetbix (1.8g). In an Açaí smoothie with 3 scoops of organic freeze dried Açaí powder, you get around 4g of dietary fibre! The new recommended intake for Australia and New Zealand suggest we consume 30g of fibre per day.

4. Heart friendly nutrients

One of the key aspects of a heart friendly diet is the inclusion of **fruits** and vegetables and the replacement of saturated fat in the diet by **unsaturated fats**.

Numerous research studies have shown that a diet rich in fruits and vegetables can reduce heart disease and stroke by 25%! What about these foods that help reduce our risk?

It is believed that it's the abundance of antioxidants. One way that antioxidants guard against heart disease is by protecting the LDL, or bad cholesterol from oxidizing - which is

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what forms plaque in our arteries and hence cause atherosclerosis, or hardening of the arteries.

Açaí is cholesterol-free. It is naturally cholesterol-free since cholesterol only comes from animal products! Why do we want to lower our cholesterol? This is because it is linked to heart disease. Açaí is not only cholesterol-free, but low in the heart-clogging saturated fat and high in the heart-friendly unsaturated fats and fibre. Together, these nutrients help reduce your cholesterol, making Açaí a heart-healthy fruit!

5. Sustained Energy

What does this exotic fruit have that gives you sustained energy throughout the day? Carbohydrates, fibre, and fatty acids, but not all carbohydrates give you sustained energy. Carbohydrates, when digested, release glucose, or sugar into our blood. The measure of the extent of the sugar rise caused after a food is eaten is called the Glycemic Index (or GI). The lower the GI of a food, the slower the food is digested and absorbed, producing a gradual rather than quick rise in blood sugar levels.

Açaí pulp has a glycemic load of 0.5. The glycemic load (GL) is a relatively new way to determine the impact of carbohydrate in our blood. It 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. The dietary fibre in Açaí acts like a sponge, mixes with all the digestive juices in our bodies, binds to the good we have eaten, and helps to slow down digestion. Instead of getting a sugar rush after a meal, the sugar is released slowly, giving you sustained energy!

Unlike most juices, most of Açaí's kilo joules come not from sugar but from the healthful unsaturated omega-6 and omega-9 fats. This is one juice you can feel good about drinking.

6. Vitamins and minerals

Vitamin E

Açaí is rich in vitamin E. Vitamin E is a fat-soluble vitamin which has antioxidant properties. Vitamin E protects our cells, especially their membranes from oxidation, or "destruction". It also helps prevent the healthy unsaturated fats from being oxidized. Studies looking at population intakes have shown that higher intakes of Vitamin E are related to a lower rate of cardiovascular disease, diabetic complications, certain cancers and cataracts.

Iron

Iron is an essential mineral. It is needed by many cells in our bodies and can be a problem to many individuals if they don't get enough of this important nutrient.

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Iron is needed by our body's red blood cells to carry oxygen and so it literally helps our cells to make energy. This is one of the reasons why Açai is so energetic! Like other plant-derived iron, the iron in Açai is not absorbed very well in our bodies.

Calcium

We need calcium for our bones and teeth to develop properly, for their maintenance, and for our muscles and heart to function. Calcium is stored in our bones and teeth, making them strong. The new Australian and New Zealand recommended Dietary Intake (RDI) states that we need 1000mg of Calcium per day. Organic freeze dried Açai provides you with 51.9mg with every 3 scoops.

Magnesium

Magnesium is a mineral needed for our bodies to produce energy. It also helps our bodies in regulating potassium and calcium. It is important in bone formation and muscles. Low intake of this important mineral may play a role in heart disease, high blood pressure, and insulin resistance.

7. Athlete fuel

Any person or individual who engages in physical activity needs to maintain a fuel and nutrient-rich diet. Certain foods provide our bodies with "fuel" to perform exercise. These foods are those rich in carbohydrates, as carbs fuel your work out. If you train when you are low on carbs, then the depleted stores will make you feel tired and your workout will be ineffective.

Açai is the perfect example of a nutritious carbohydrate rich food. It provides an athlete with energy from carbohydrates, calcium to maintain bone health and muscle contraction, and iron to help your body circulate oxygen to your muscles during exercise.

With exercise, our bodies sweat and lose essential salts and minerals. By having Açai after a workout, it will provide your body with a good combination of carbohydrate, protein, fats and minerals. Another benefit of Açai for the athlete is its high antioxidant content. Exercise equals stress in our bodies, which translates to an increase in free radicals. Açai's antioxidants may help out bodies with the high stress our tissues experience with exercise.