

Strawberry daiquiris – the extra-healthy cocktail?

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Strawberries are good for you, but serving them in daiquiri form may make them even healthier, scientists show.

While exploring ways to help keep strawberries fresh during storage, researchers from Thailand and the US discovered that treating the berries with alcohol led to an increase in antioxidant capacity and free radical scavenging activity within the fruit. While such a boost helped the berries resist decay, the same compounds would also be expected to make the strawberries healthier to eat.

Dr Korakot Chanjirakul and colleagues at Kasetsart University in Thailand, in collaboration with scientists at the United States Department of Agriculture, tested the berries with ethanol and found that the treatment improved the physiology of the fruit as measured by several different laboratory tests for antioxidant activity (SCI's *Journal of the Science of Food and Agriculture*, doi 10.1002/jsfa.2841).

Coloured berry fruits like strawberries contain compounds known as polyphenols and anthocyanins. Consumption of these compounds has been linked to the prevention of diseases ranging from cancer to neurodegenerative disorders. They work by helping to mop up damaging free radicals produced naturally during a person's normal metabolism.

Those who aren't keen on strawberry daiquiris might be relieved to know that the scientists found similar results with blackberries, meaning that a blackberry-crowned champagne cocktail might achieve the same effect.

Source: Society of Chemical Industry

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