

New research suggests tart cherries could speed muscle recovery

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Tart cherries could help athletes reduce muscle damage to recover faster from a tough workout, according to new research published in the American College of Sports Medicine's journal *Medicine & Science in Sports & Exercise*.

Researchers at the Sports and Exercise Science Research Center at London South Bank University in the UK gave 10 trained [athletes](#) 1 ounce of an antioxidant-packed tart [cherry juice](#) concentrate (provided by CherryActive) twice daily for seven days prior to and two days after an intense round of strength training. The athletes' recovery after the cherry juice concentrate was significantly faster compared to when they drank juice without the same phytonutrient content of cherry juice.

After drinking cherry juice, athletes returned to 90 percent of normal [muscle](#) force at 24 hours, compared to only 85 percent of normal at the same time point without cherry juice – a significant difference that could affect an athlete's next bout of performance. Researchers suggest that the powerful antioxidant compounds in cherry juice likely decreased oxidative damage to the athletes' muscles – the damage that normally occurs when muscles are worked to their max – allowing the muscles to recover more quickly.

Cherries and Muscle Recovery

This is the latest in a growing body of science linking cherries to muscle

recovery. Researchers attribute the benefits to anti-inflammatory, antioxidant compounds in the red fruit called anthocyanins, also responsible for cherries' bright red color.

"Cherries are what I call an ultimate super food," said Dr. Wendy Bazilian, DrPH, registered dietitian and author of *The SuperFoodsRx Diet: Lose Weight with the Power of SuperNutrients* "Not only are they a perfect complement to a training routine since they're available year-round in dried, frozen and juice forms, but they taste great." Dr. Bazilian says some of her favorite ways to include cherries in the diet range from topping dried cherries in oatmeal to enjoying a smoothie of cherry juice and low-fat yogurt.

In addition to recovery benefits, research also suggests cherries could affect inflammation related to heart disease and arthritis.

Provided by Weber Shandwick Worldwide

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