



## Acai Berry & Use in Pregnancy

I have been consuming Acai berry for over 12 months now and feel enormous benefits in my high energy levels and great sleep quality. When I fell pregnant I wanted to continue taking this Superfood and felt it wise to do some research into why it would be beneficial. It turns out that Acai is a goldmine for supporting the natural processes that occur during pregnancy— it contains so many essential nutrients, is anti-inflammatory and supports healthy blood sugar levels.

Acai berry has been a traditional food in the Amazon for hundreds of years and is used to treat a wide range of conditions such as diabetes, hair loss, haemorrhages, menstrual pain and diarrhoea. The active constituents in Acai are antioxidants— primarily the anthocyanadins and proanthocyanidins<sup>1</sup>. Resveratrol has also been identified in Acai which is phenomenal as this compound has been proven to extend life in mice studies.

Vitamins found in Acai berries are vitamin A, vitamin C and B<sub>3</sub> as well as the minerals calcium, iron and phosphorous. Acai contains 73.9% unsaturated fats, including the beneficial omega3, 6 and 9. Acai has the complete range of amino acids making it 8% total protein and fibre levels of up to 44.2gr per 100grams<sup>2</sup>. All of these nutritional benefits are an advantage to women in pregnancy as her requirements change with the growing baby's needs.

In a 2006 study Acai demonstrated considerable anti-inflammatory activity<sup>3</sup> which could be beneficial to reduce pregnancy symptoms such as nasal congestion, bleeding gums, swollen ankles and possibly pre-eclampsia. A 2010 study showed that Acai taken twice a day for 30 days lowered blood sugar levels, insulin and LDL cholesterol in the healthy subjects<sup>4</sup>. Consuming Acai regularly throughout pregnancy will support healthy blood sugar levels and therefore reduce the risk of gestational diabetes.

This tasty little berry is one that makes a regular feature in my daily diet – whether in my morning smoothie, with organic sheep's yoghurt as a snack mid afternoon or mixed in with some coconut water after a walk.

## References

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