

Coconut sugar may lower blood pressure, artery stiffness in older adults

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A first-of-its-kind study finds a natural coconut sugar may help reduce the risk of cardiovascular disease by improving blood vessel health and managing high blood pressure. The study is published ahead of print in

the *Journal of Applied Physiology*.

Higher blood pressure and [arterial stiffness](#) with older age are two risk factors contributing to cardiovascular disease. In a new study, researchers explored the effect of a natural sweetener on blood pressure and arterial stiffness in middle-aged and older adults.

Coconut sap powder, which is a natural sweetener derived from coconut sugar traditionally used in Asian cuisine, is rich in vitamins B and C, as well as iron, calcium and potassium. Coconut sap powder also contains flavonoids and nitrates—compounds known to contribute to blood vessel health—and inulin, a prebiotic soluble fiber that helps regulate blood sugar levels.

Previous research suggests coconut sap powder increases antioxidant biomarkers in young adults. In the current study, a group of volunteers with an average age of 55 took either a coconut sap powder supplement or a placebo every day for eight weeks. Before and after the trial, the research team measured the volunteers' resting [heart rate](#), [cholesterol levels](#), markers of inflammation, blood pressure and arterial stiffness.

The group of volunteers who took the coconut sap powder supplement had lower systolic blood pressure when measured in the arm, but not when measured in the carotid artery. However, stiffness of the common carotid artery was reduced. However, blood markers of inflammation and [oxidative stress](#) did not change with the consumption of coconut sap powder.

"The [coconut sap powder]-lowering effects on [blood pressure] and arterial stiffness provide insight for [coconut sap powder] as a novel nutraceutical to potentially treat age-related cardiovascular dysfunction and disease," the researchers wrote.

"Coconut sugar derived from coconut inflorescence sap lowers systolic [blood pressure](#) and arterial stiffness in middle-aged and older adults: a [pilot study](#)" is published ahead of print in the *Journal of Applied Physiology*.

More information: Nicholas A. Carlini et al, Coconut Sugar Derived from Coconut Inflorescence Sap Lowers Systolic Blood Pressure and Arterial Stiffness in Middle-aged and Older Adults: A Pilot Study, *Journal of Applied Physiology* (2023). [DOI: 10.1152/jappphysiol.00394.2022](#)

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