



For Immediate Release
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Eating Anthocyanin-Rich Berries Can Substantially Reduce Women's Risk of Heart Attack

Portland, Maine – Women who eat three or more weekly servings of berries may reduce their risk of heart attack by up to 33 per cent, even after accounting for other healthy aspects of their diet. That's the finding of a new study conducted by researchers at the Harvard School of Public Health.

The study attributed the women's reduced risk to anthocyanins, natural flavonoid compounds found in the skins of many berries. Wild Blueberries contain higher levels of anthocyanins, which are concentrated in the wild berries' deep blue pigments, than many other berries.

"Our ability to identify specific compounds in foods has increased in the last ten years, making this kind of research possible," said study co-author Eric Rimm of Harvard's School of Public Health. "And in multiple studies examining the impact of various flavonoid compounds on heart disease, stroke and blood pressure, we're discovering that anthocyanins are the compound that shows the most promise."

Anthocyanins are believed to dilate arteries, counter the buildup of plaque and provide other cardiovascular benefits.

"Increasing our intake of anthocyanin-rich berries is a smart move that has significant potential health benefits beyond this great news about the potential for significant reduction in heart attack risk for women," said Susan Davis, MS, RD, nutrition advisor to the Wild Blueberry Association of North America. "And Wild Blueberries are leaders in the amount of anthocyanins they contain."

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Davis's comments echo the sentiment of Elizabeth Devore, co-author of a 2012 study that found that regular weekly consumption of berries slows memory decline. "It's a dietary change most people can make – and maintain over a long period of time – without difficulty," she said at the time.

The research about berries and reduced risk of heart attack in women was conducted by scientists in the United States and England on data collected from nearly 94,000 women participating in the Nurses' Health Study II, an effort to compile long-term health and nutrition data from a group of women between the ages of 25-42. The results of the research were published in *Circulation: Journal of the American Heart Association*.

(<http://circ.ahajournals.org/content/127/2/188.abstract>)

Wild Blueberries are frozen fresh at the peak of antioxidant freshness, and available only in the frozen fruit case at grocery stores. Available year-round and frozen for convenience, Wild Blueberries make it easy to add at least three weekly servings of anthocyanin-rich berries to a healthy diet. Frozen fresh Wild Blueberries maintain their flavor, texture and nutritional properties. They may be eaten alone; sprinkled on yogurt, cereal or oatmeal; and blended into delicious smoothies.

"Adding regular servings of anthocyanin-rich Wild Blueberries to our diets is a smart move for women of all ages," said Davis. "It's never too early or too late to start."

About the Wild Blueberry Association of North America

(www.wildblueberries.com)

The Wild Blueberry Association of North America is a trade association of growers and processors of Wild Blueberries from Maine and Canada, dedicated to bringing the Wild Blueberry health story and unique Wild Advantages to consumers and the trade worldwide.

For news, recipes, and related health information about Wild Blueberries, visit www.wildblueberries.com, www.wildblueberryhealthblog.com, and follow www.facebook.com/wildblueberries and www.twitter.com/WildBBerries4U.

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