

Should I Drink Aloe Vera Juice?

Why You May Want to Think Twice Before Buying

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If you've done research on home remedies, you may have noticed that aloe vera juice shows up as a potential natural treatment for many common health ailments. Among other uses, people consume it as a medicinal drink for alleviating constipation, calming heartburn, and soothing the bladder pain and urgency of [interstitial cystitis](#). However, the evidence for aloe vera juice's effectiveness at treating most health complaints is limited.

Here's a look at whether it's worth it to hit the health food store for a bottle of aloe vera juice.

What Is Aloe Vera Juice?

You may know aloe vera as a topical ointment for soothing sunburns or other skin conditions, but this plant doesn't only come in the form of a cooling gel. Juice is another of its byproducts. This clear liquid, like the topical gel, is derived from the leaves of the succulent desert plant [aloe vera](#). It has been used since ancient times in Indian, Chinese, and Egyptian traditional medicine to treat a variety of conditions.

What Are the Potential Benefits?

Aloe vera juice is touted as a curative tool for a host of physical problems. Are you wondering how it really stacks up? Some scientific evidence shows it may provide the following health benefits.

May Reduce Inflammation

“Plants often gain attention for their anti-inflammatory properties owing to polyphenolic compounds,” says dietitian [Sharon Puello](#), MA, RDN, CDN, CDCES. “These compounds, more simply put, are what we refer to as antioxidants. Aloe is no exception. Barbaloin is one of the main antioxidants in aloe.”

Research shows that barbaloin could function as an anti-histamine, anti-inflammatory, anti-viral, and even anti-cancer compound. That said, more research is needed to confirm how much benefit these properties might provide in real life—especially from a mere glass or two of aloe vera juice.

May Relieve Constipation

One of the most common uses of aloe vera juice is to [relieve constipation](#). “Aloe vera contains a natural compound, anthraquinone, that is often used in pharmaceuticals as a potent laxative,” says dietitian [Andrew Akhaphong](#), MS, RD, LD. “Anthraquinone, in particular, increases intestinal fluid content, mucus secretion, and intestinal movement to expel waste.”

Some studies have looked at the effectiveness of oral aloe vera as a tonic for constipation. A small 2017 study, for example, gave participants 100-200 milligrams of aloe vera twice a day for 20 days. At the end of this treatment regimen, 80% of participants experienced improved measures of bowel health, such as reduced straining and more regularity.

Other research from 2018 examined three randomized clinical trials conducted on the effectiveness of aloe vera for treating Irritable Bowel Syndrome (IBS). Compared to a placebo, aloe vera made a significant difference in patients' IBS symptoms, without causing any adverse results. On the other hand, an older study from 2006 found aloe vera had no benefits for people with IBS.

And here's an important factor to keep in mind: according to the National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences, it's not always clear how much laxative substance is in commercially available aloe vera juices. Most liquid products studied have been found to contain less than one part per million.

Could Soothe GERD Symptoms

If you suffer from gastroesophageal reflux disease (GERD), you're likely all too familiar with the burning and discomfort that occurs when stomach acid washes up into your esophagus. Just like topical aloe vera gel can feel soothing on your skin, its juice is thought to help soothe this part of your GI tract.

In a 2015 study, subjects with GERD were given either aloe vera juice, an antacid, or a proton pump inhibitor for four weeks. Aloe vera had comparable results to the medications. Researchers concluded it could be a safe and effective alternative to pharmaceuticals. However, more studies are needed to conclude this benefit.

Might Bring Interstitial Cystitis Relief

Interstitial cystitis (IC) is a painful bladder condition affecting mostly women. Whereas many foods can be triggers for pain and urinary frequency in people with this condition, aloe vera might serve as a food-as-medicine option for relief. As with other conditions, the effects of aloe vera juice on interstitial cystitis aren't perfectly clear-cut, but some data is promising.

In a 400-person survey reported by the Interstitial Cystitis Association, for example, after three months of treatment with oral aloe vera, 75% of respondents said they experienced relief of at least one IC symptom. And nearly half reported significant relief from the majority of their symptoms. However, note that capsules were used in this survey, not juice.

What Are Potential Drawbacks?

Despite its potential for boosting health, aloe vera juice isn't without its drawbacks. Before you load up on this home remedy, consider these concerns.

Safety Concerns

Aloe vera juice is generally considered safe. However, in some circumstances, it could cause problems.

Laxative Effects: As a treatment for constipation, it could become *too* effective, taking you to the opposite end of the digestive spectrum: diarrhea. This effect could be especially pronounced if you combine aloe vera juice with other laxative products. “Using aloe vera juice in addition to

stimulant laxatives such as bisacodyl or sennosides may increase its intended effect,” says Akhaphong.

Dehydration & Electrolyte Depletion: Not only can a bout of diarrhea be uncomfortable and result in dehydration, but it could also sap your body of important electrolytes. “If you’re taking aloe for constipation and diarrhea develops, be extra mindful if you have a history of low potassium levels, as potassium can be lost fairly quickly,” Puello says.

Latex Concern: Meanwhile, there’s an additional, more hidden concern you might not expect from a bottle of aloe vera juice. “Aloe vera plants contain natural latex. For those with latex allergies, it is not recommended to consume aloe vera juice,” advises Akhaphong.

Added Sugar and Other Ingredients

There’s plenty of variability among the aloe vera juice products you can find on grocery and health food store shelves. While pure aloe vera juice is colorless and has no added sugar, some brands increase the drink’s palatability by adding sweetener and artificial color—typically a bright green hue.

As for [added sugar](#), it’s smart to be a diligent label reader to know exactly what you’re getting. “If using aloe vera juice as a means of decreasing inflammation, and/or improving GERD or pre-diabetes, the aloe vera juices with a high sugar content will be counterproductive,” says Puello. “A good aloe vera juice should have 0 grams of added sugar.”

Unpleasant Taste

Though you might expect the aloe vera plant’s juice to come with a sweet (or perhaps even mint-like) flavor, many people find the taste of the pure juice unpleasant. Without added sweetener, it can be quite sour or bitter.

Lack of Evidence

Naturally, when purchasing and drinking any dietary supplement or home remedy, you want to know it will do the job it’s intended for. But, while some studies support drinking aloe vera juice for various ailments, the health benefits are not entirely rooted in science. More research is needed to draw firm conclusions about how drinking this juice can impact health.

What You May Want to Drink Instead

Aloe vera juice doesn’t own the market on health benefits like reducing constipation and acid reflux.

- **Water:** For a beverage that hydrates and improves digestion, you can't go wrong with good, old-fashioned water!
- **Hot Water with Lemon:** Some people especially like hot water with lemon as a constipation reliever. (The idea goes that the vitamin C from lemon juice pulls extra water into the gut, softening the stool.)
- **Smoothies:** These blended drinks are another alternative beverage to help with multiple digestive complaints. Common smoothie ingredients, such as greek yogurt, bananas, and spinach, are good choices for taming GERD symptoms. Plus, with fiber and probiotics, these foods promote healthy bowel habits as well—with a much better taste than plain aloe vera juice.

A Word From Verywell

At Verywell Fit, we aim to provide the facts behind the fads, especially when it comes to products and health habits that are popular but may not be entirely rooted in science. When it comes to herbal remedies and supplements, including beverages like aloe vera juice, be a cautious consumer.

While there are some purported health benefits of products like aloe vera juice, take a closer look at the science. Many studies are done on limited populations, are done with capsules or extracts that are stronger than the juice form, or are designed by supplement companies to promote a certain end result.

Instead of reaching for a product that may not provide everything the label claims, we suggest looking to adequate hydration, balanced nutrition, good sleep hygiene, daily movement, and other positive lifestyle factors to ensure you feel your best.

7 Sources

Verywell Fit uses only high-quality sources, including peer-reviewed studies, to support the facts within our articles. Read our [editorial process](#) to learn more about how we fact-check and keep our content accurate, reliable, and trustworthy.

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