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Blueberries give MRIs a boost

Medicine - Blueberries are a powerhouse fruit. The antioxidant-rich berries are known to fight cancers and heart disease, lower cholesterol and slow the aging process.



Now, blueberries are being used to improve magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) procedures.

The radiology department at St. Paul's Hospital in Vancouver is giving patients blueberry juice to take better MRI images of bile ducts.

"Normally, the fluid in the stomach is always in the way and degrades the image," says Wayne Patola of the radiology department in a news release.

Patola says research has proven blueberries can help, as well as tea, pineapple juice and Kaopectate, an oral drug used to treat diarrhea.

"Blueberry juice given orally will affect the way the fluid behaves on MRI and effectively remove it from appearing on the image. This allows for better visualization of the bile ducts."

The department uses TrueBlue Blueberry Juice, a Vancouver-based, all-natural product that is sweetened with cane sugar. According to the release, "each 473-mL bottle of TrueBlue Blueberry Juice has as much juice as a full serving of fresh blueberries."