

This simple ingredient could help you burn a third more fat while exercising

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- **BY** JON LIVESEY

Scientists from the University of Chichester have found that a daily dose of the ingredient can also shorten recovery times and boost performance



They're berry good for you: Blackcurrants could help you lose weight this January

Taking a daily dose of blackcurrant extract can help you burn a third more fat while exercising, according to a new scientific study.

The research, conducted by the University of Chichester, West Sussex, is being hailed as a breakthrough for Brits struggling to lose weight.

And experts claim the extract can also improve recovery times while boosting performance.

Lead author Mark Willems says the 'fat oxidation' properties he and his team have discovered are 'substantial'.

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Meanwhile CurraNZ, the UK firm responsible for the supplement being tested, say its product can give those returning to the gym after a layoff a 'massive boost' in their quest [for fitness](#) .



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Booster: The firm behind the CurraNZ supplement say their product can help gym-goers

Professor Willems said: “We tested a group of trained cyclists at three different intensities of which one was low-to-moderate, and the other two were moderate.

“And we found increased fat burning properties at all intensities.

“If the general public gets off the sofa and does some moderately-intensive exercise, while also taking blackcurrant extract for seven days, they’ll experience increased fat burning.”

The CurraNZ tablets contain the extract of blackcurrants grown in unique conditions on New Zealand’s South Island.

Here they enjoy the Southern Hemisphere’s intense UV light, which is believed to be responsible for stimulating the plants into producing unusually high levels of protective and health-giving nutrients.



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Fitness: CurraNZ tablets contain the extract of blackcurrants grown in New Zealand

The key ingredients are anthocyanins, pigments in the fruit's skin responsible for their dark purple colouring, which belong to group of flavonoids called ‘polyphenols’ and possess high levels of antioxidants.

The study saw a group of 14 cyclists being given either a week’s worth of 300mg tablets of CurraNZ, which each contains the equivalent of around 85 blackcurrants, or a placebo.

After seven days of taking one tablet per day, the cyclists were asked to perform 30 minutes of riding at three different intensities – at 45%,

55% and 65% of the athlete's pre-established maximal aerobic capacity.

And the results appear to be emphatic.

At the highest intensity, fat oxidation was 27% greater than normal, and even at the lowest intensity was improved by 15%



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Breakthrough: Professor Mark Willems has hailed the importance of the findings

Prof Willems explains: "This figure of 27% is huge.

"There are no other supplements which can increase fat oxidation so substantially.

"And these findings may have implications for nutritional strategies used by endurance athletes to enhance performance and alter substrate utilisation too."

Prof Willems, who published the results in the European Journal of Applied Physiology, is still unsure as to exactly why the CurraNZ tablets have this impact.

But he suspects the blackcurrants helps transport fat directly to a muscle's 'powerhouse' where it gets turned into energy.



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Example: British triathlete Lucy Charles (l) has endorsed CurraNZ

He added: "In layman's terms, CurraNZ allows higher activation of an enzyme that increases fat transport into the powerhouse of the muscle, the mitochondria.

"This is where all the energy is generated.

Read more : [Like a Big Mac? Study reveals gym-time required to burn it off](#)

“At the moment this is speculative and it needs to be proven. But that’s what I believe is happening here.”

The anthocyanins present in CurraNZ were also found to improve recovery times by boosting blood flow to the muscles and having an anti-inflammatory action.

Prof Willems continued: “As we know, blackcurrant is a food source rich in polyphenols, including something called anthocyanins.

“Anthocyanins are a flavonoid group that has been associated with benefit for human health through anti-inflammatory effects and anti-oxidant activity.



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Champ: Lucy Charles says blackcurrant extract has made a difference to her fitness levels

“In addition, blackcurrant intake has also been reported to increase peripheral blood flow.

“An improved peripheral blood flow induced by anthocyanin related vasodilation may benefit lactate removal through greater uptake through the liver, heart, kidney and skeletal muscles.”

Nicki Bundock, spokeswoman for CurraNZ, says the message is clear - taking their supplements will help you get fitter quicker.

She stated: “Whether you’re power walking or hammering the gym after Christmas, by taking CurraNZ you simply burn more fat while doing so.

“And if you’ve not been to the gym for a while, CurraNZ will also help you recover quicker and therefore enable you to exercise more frequently.

“When you first return to exercise, having not done anything for a while, the next day all your muscles ache and everything burns.



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Benefits: Lucy says CurraNZ has helped shorten her recovery time

“However, New Zealand blackcurrants reduce tissue damage and post-exercise muscle soreness, as well as clearing lactate faster, so has a big effect on your recovery.

“And because CurraNZ opens all the body’s blood vessels and therefore increases oxygen delivery to cells, this has a profound effect on reducing lactate production during exercise - by up to 27% - which is massive.

“The increased blood flow then helps clear away the waste products, produced by your body as a natural side effect of exercise, and oxygenates your blood.

“These multiple benefits will help you achieve your goals much quicker than you would normally. It will give you a massive boost and allow you to get fitter faster and lose more weight.”



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Help: Lucy has credited blackcurrant extract with playing a part in her Ironman success

The product has been endorsed by top British triathlete Lucy Charles, who competes in Ironman events where competitors swim 2.4 miles, bike 112 miles and then run a 26.2 mile marathon.

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The Hertfordshire-based [personal trainer](#) and triathlon coach, 22, said: “I started using the antioxidant-rich CurraNZ blackcurrant in March 2015 and noticed a big difference, especially during a pre-season two-week training camp in Lanzarote, where I managed to train solidly with next to no fatigue, covering over 600 miles on the bike.

“Since then, I've used CurraNZ for every race this season, which has allowed me to jump straight back into training on a Monday morning.

“Once my longer races started, I was pleasantly surprised at my recovery rate, even after a full Ironman!

“I have no doubt that CurraNZ, alongside consistent hard work and dedication, has led to my recent successes, becoming the under 25 Ironman 70.3 World Champion in Austria and Hawaii.”

A month's supply of CurraNZ costs £29 from www.healthcurrancy.co.uk .