



Active Nutrition

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Cinnamon – Is it the “Wonder for Weight Loss “ or it Toxic?

Recently a client advised me that he was “loading up” on cinnamon to help with weight loss. He had been given this advice by a friend. Immediately alarm bells were ringing in my mind. I strongly advised him that this was not the “magic formula” to weight loss nor was overloading good for his health. I have decided that I should share the good and bad around cinnamon with you so you can avoid the pitfalls.

Now don't get me wrong, cinnamon, in small amounts, is fantastic for your health and can aid weight loss:-

- Reduces cholesterol – research has found that ¼ teaspoon a day reduced triglycerides, cholesterol and LDL – the bad cholesterol
- Diabetes – in the same study, participant blood sugars were reduced by consuming ¼ teaspoon of cinnamon per day
- Circulation Booster – increases circulation
- Over the centuries it has been used as a digestive aid, assisting with the breakdown of fats as well as reducing stomach aches when mixed with honey
- Research also suggests that it can be used as a pain reliever, particularly in arthritis where they found that it slowed the breakdown of bones and reduced bone damage
- It has also been used as a complexion enhancer due to its anti-fungal and anti-bacterial qualities (used on the skin); menstrual aid and pain reliever.
- Cinnamon is also an anti-oxidant
- Helps to reduce sugar in cooking by giving flavour

HOWEVER!

Cinnamon contains an ingredient – coumarin – which, in large enough doses can cause liver and kidney damage as well as cancerous tumours. Coumarin is a compound found in warfarin, a medication used to keep blood from clotting and for this reason alone it is advisable not to go over recommended amounts.



There are different types of cinnamon:

1. Cassia type of cinnamon which is more commonly used has high content of coumarin
2. Cinnamon verum which contains small amounts of coumarin

When purchasing ground cinnamon it is difficult to find out which cinnamon has been used. However, if you use cinnamon sticks you can identify which type you are buying relatively easily:-

Cinnamon verum has a sweet delicate taste whereas cassia cinnamon is strong and peppery

With cinnamon verum sticks the layers are thinner and multi-layered whereas with the cassia type the layers are thicker and very hard, rough and uneven



The German Federal Institute for Risk Assessment has established a tolerable intake of 0.1mg of coumarin per kilogram body weight per day. One teaspoon of cassia cinnamon contains between 5.8 to 12.1 mg coumarin. So add cinnamon to your food to add taste, substitute sugar and for your health. But go easy on it!



Would you like further information?

There are no barriers to good information.

Book an appointment or just drop me a line from my web site www.activenutrition.co.nz



Recipe of the Month

Spicy Cinnamon Tea



1 stick cinnamon
5 cloves
1 vanilla pod

100g loose-leaf green tea
1 teaspoon ground ginger
1 tablespoon dried cranberries

Thoroughly clean and dry a glass jar. Make sure it has not previously stored strong flavoured food as this can affect the quality of the tea.

Break cinnamon stick in small pieces then place in jar with the rest of the ingredients. Close the lid tightly and shake until mixed well. Leave the mixture to infuse for 24 to 36 hours. Then use as you would green tea. Yum.