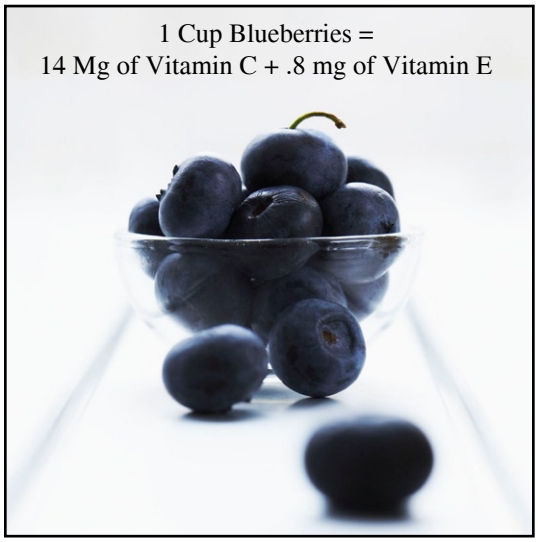
Blueberries and Antioxidant Activity

Acai is a great source for many of the basic nutrients your body needs

Antioxidants help protect the body against the damaging effects of free radicals and the chronic diseases associated with the aging process. Fresh fruits, including blueberries, contain many of these naturally occurring antioxidants such as Vitamins C and E. Based on data from the USDA Human Nutrition Research Center on Aging (Boston, MA), blueberries are among the fruits with the highest antioxidant activity. Blueberries contain 14 mg of Vitamin C and 0.8 mg Vitamin E per 1 cup.

1 Cup Blueberries =
14 Mg of Vitamin C + .8 mg of Vitamin E



Blueberries & Health

In addition, blueberries contain anthocyanins and phenolics that can also act as antioxidants. Using a test called ORAC (Oxygen Radical Absorbance Capacity), researchers have shown that a serving of fresh blueberries provides more antioxidant activity than 95% of other fresh fruits and vegetables.

Blueberries & Aging

Researchers at Rutgers University, in New Jersey, have also identified compounds in blueberries called proanthocyanidins that promote urinary tract health and reduce the risk of infection by preventing bacteria from adhering to the cells that line the walls of the urinary tract.

In a USDA Human Nutrition Research Center laboratory, neuroscientists discovered that feeding blueberries to laboratory rats slowed age-related loss in their mental capacity, a finding that has important implications for humans.

In one study, Jim Joseph, director of the neuroscience laboratory in the USDA Human Nutrition Research Center (HNRC), fed blueberry extractions, the equivalent of a human eating one cup of blueberries a day, to mice and then ran them through a series of motor skills tests. He found that the blueberry-fed mice performed better than their control group counterparts in motor behavioral learning / memory, and noticed an increase in exploratory behavior. When he examined their brains, he found a marked decrease in oxidative stress in two regions of the brain and better retention of signal-transmitting neurons compared with the control mice.

Blueberries are shown to test high in their ability to subdue free radicals.

The compound that appears responsible for this neuron protection, anthocyanin, also gives blueberries their color and might be the key component of the blueberry's antioxidant and anti-inflammatory properties. Blueberries, along with other colorful fruits and vegetables, test high in their ability to subdue free radicals. These free radicals, which can damage cell membranes and DNA through a process known as oxidative stress, are blamed for many of the dysfunctions and diseases associated with aging. These findings could become increasingly important as the U.S. population ages. It is projected that by 2050, more than 30% of Americans will be over 65 and will have the decreased cognitive and motor function that accompanies advanced age.