

The sweet super food.

Honey has been eaten for thousands of years. When some of the tombs were opened in Egypt, they found honey that had been put there for the entombed so they would have it in their next life. The honey had crystallized and was still perfectly good, even though it had been there for 5,000 years!

The majority of honey that you would buy in a supermarket is not the same honey that has been eaten for thousands of years. Only careful and minimal processing will preserve the many nutritive benefits of honey. Honey should never be heated during extraction or the enzymes will be destroyed, nor should it be fine filtered.

The fine filtering of honey removes much of what makes raw honey a healthy and desirable food. This would include particles of pollen, beeswax and propolis. When the pollen is still present in the honey it is said to provide relief to allergy sufferers. Small amounts of pollen act as an inoculant against large amounts in the air that trigger reactions like the runny nose and itchy eyes of hay fever. As honey is predigested it is very easy for the body to digest. When it is consumed with carbohydrates like porridge or toast, the enzymes in the honey help with the digestion of carbohydrates. Different honeys from different nectar sources are quite different. They have different combinations of sugars, minerals and enzymes. For example, very dark honeys have a high mineral content. Lighter honeys are lower in minerals and are usually milder in taste.

Another benefit to honey is that it is a good source of antioxidants so play a big role in the prevention of cancer as well as heart disease. It can also be used as a moisturiser to be later removed with splashes of water. Not only will it moisturise the skin but it will also help combat acne with only a small amount being needed for both uses. Bee keepers who regularly eat honey are said to live long and healthy lives.

Honey is a natural antiseptic. Medical journals cite more than 600 cases in which honey was employed to treat wounds by preventing infection. Honey contains a antimicrobial agent, which prevents infections by killing the bacteria in and around your wound. Many types of bacteria cant survive in honey so wounds heal, swelling eases and tissue can grow back.

Some interesting facts about bees are:

Honey bees are the only insect to produce food for humans, a healthy hive contains approximately 40-60 thousand bees. During the honey production period a bees life span is only 4-6 weeks.

Bees visit approximately two million flowers to make one pound of honey.

Bees travel an average of 1,600 round trips in order to produce on ounce of honey, each round trip being as far as 6 miles. To produce 2 pounds of honey bees travel a distance equal to 4 times round the earth!

Queens lay approximately 1,500 to 2,000 eggs per day at a rate of 5 to 6 per minute. One queen lays between 175,000 and 200,000 eggs per year.

So don't put their hard work to waste, go and get your self some raw honey and think about how much hard work has gone into that small amount you eat!

James white

James is a level 1 coach at Dax Moy Personal Training Studios, Islington, where he works with clients to achieve rapid fitness and fat loss results.

To find out more or to contact James with questions related to this article visit jameswhitepersonaltraining.co.uk