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By Ed Leahy

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Blueberries could boost children's memory



New research reveals blueberries potentially "significant" positive effects on the brain of primary school children

New research published in the European Journal of Nutrition found that eating blueberries could give children a significant memory boost.

The randomised control trial recruited 54 children between seven to ten years old, and asked them to drink a 200ml wild blueberry drink or a placebo. The wild blueberry drink contained 253mg anthocyanins, and was the equivalent to about one and a half cups of fresh blueberries (about a punnet).

Researchers then assessed the children's verbal memory, cognitive function and reasoning efficiency

before and two hours after the drink was consumed. The team found children who had drunk the blueberry concoction showed improved reaction times and cognitive function, dubbed executive function (EF).

The report states: "Consumption of the wild blueberry drink was found to significantly improve memory and attentional aspects of EF. This indicates that a flavonoid-rich blueberry product, equivalent to 240 g or one and a half cups of fresh blueberries can provide acute cognitive benefits in children.

"These findings support accumulating evidence that flavonoid-rich products

are beneficial for healthy brain function, particularly during critical developmental periods."

Dr Emma Derbyshire, public health nutritionist and adviser to British Summer Fruits commented, "This was a well-designed trial and implies that giving children berries as part of their breakfast in the morning or tucked away in their lunch boxes could well help to boost their brain power when they are at school, especially during exam season."