

Bee Pollen Profile

Also known as

Pollen (not to be confused with propolis)

Introduction

Who could know the health benefits of bee pollen better than a bee? When bees help themselves to nectar so they can make honey, they coat their legs with pollen in the process. This bee pollen is collected when they return to the hive where they have to pass through a screen to get back into the hive. This screen gently scrapes the pollen of their legs as they pass through it and it will then drop into a collection tray for our use. Bee pollen has a long and storied past throughout human history. Hippocrates and Pythagoras both prescribed bee pollen for its healing properties. Native Americans wore pouches containing pollen around their necks on long journeys to eat so they could sustain a high level of energy. The Chinese, Romans, and Egyptians all regarded pollen as a panacea. In China, pollen was first described well over 2000 years ago as sweet tasting and neutral, having diuretic, hemostatic, and stasis-dispersing properties. Later it was used to treat bleeding of various kinds, as well as abdominal pain, painful urination, and mouth sores. To this day, China is still the world's major producer of pollen.

Constituents

Antioxidant flavonoids, including myricetin, quercetin, rutin, and trans-cinnamic acid.

Parts Used

Dried pollen in whole, broken or powdered form

Typical Preparations

Typically taken in capsule form, up to 10 tablets a day of up to 500 milligrams each, as an extract, or it may be administered directly or sprinkled on food. Extracts of bee pollen are used in some skin care products.

Summary

The antioxidants in bee pollen are compounds chemists call flavonoids. Bee pollen packs the punch of myricetin, quercetin, rutin, and trans-cinnamic acid. You don't need to remember their names, but here's what they can do for you. Myricetin helps white blood cells soak up the "bad" LDL cholesterol out of the bloodstream. Quercetin is a natural antihistamine—the right kind of pollen can be beneficial for your allergies. Rutin is best known as the remedy for varicose veins. Rutin protects veins throughout the body and may help prevent cancer as well. Your body uses trans-cinnamic acid to make its own antibiotics, and this potent nutrient also powers the detoxifying processes of the liver. Another key fact about bee pollen is that it is a source of complete nutrition. Bee pollen is richer in protein than any flesh-based food. Gram for gram, bee pollen supplements contain more amino acids than fish, beef, or eggs.

Precautions

Since the anti-allergy effect of bee pollen is probably due to quercetin than to the particular plants the bees harvested, it is not necessary to use a locally collected bee pollen (or honey). If you have severe allergies to ANY pollen, avoid bee pollen.