

KOMBUCHA

THE TRUTH YOU NEED TO KNOW



DISCOVER THE TRUTH ABOUT
KOMBUCHA FERMENTED TEA

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Introduction

Hello and welcome to our short, beginners guide on all aspects of Kombucha, a fermented tea also known as “the tea of immortality”.

If you go into any health food store and even many other stores that sell drinks, you will find kombucha, often in a huge variety of brands and flavors. Although it’s been around for thousands of years, it’s only been in recent years that it’s gained popularity in the United States and is being hailed as a healthy drink that has a number of benefits, which we will cover in this guide. Firstly let’s start at the beginning...

What is Kombucha?

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Kombucha is a fermented tea drink. It is naturally effervescent much like carbonated beverages, and contains tea, water, sugar, healthy bacteria, and yeast. The healthy bacteria and yeast are what work together to ferment this beverage which gives kombucha its many health benefits.

Now, here are a few of the reasons as to why kombucha is such a popular drink:

Easy to Make

We'll go into more details later, but the basic brewing of kombucha involves making tea with sugar, then adding something known as SCOBY which contains the bacteria and yeast and allowing it to set for a certain number of days to ferment. Because it's so easy to make, many people prefer making their own kombucha to buying it in stores.

Variety of Flavors

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Because you can start with nearly any type of tea and add additional flavors after the brewing process, it means that the possibilities are endless when it comes to the flavors that kombucha can have. You can also find kombucha in the store in many different flavors, so there's always something different that you can try and tantalize your taste buds.

Good Soft Drink Alternative

For people that love the carbonation of sugary soft drinks, kombucha makes an excellent alternative. It's not only got the fizziness that makes soft drinks stand out, but it's also much lower in sugar without lacking in flavor. The fact that there is a healthy alternative to soft drinks is great news for people who want to kick that addiction without losing out on enjoying a delicious beverage.

Low in Caffeine

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While some people may need some caffeine in their tea to get a little boost to make it through the day, others prefer lower caffeine because of the way it affects them such as keeping them from being able to fall asleep at night. Because of the fermentation process, kombucha allows you to get many of the great benefits of tea without the addition of caffeine.

Relaxing

One of the natural by-products of the fermentation process is alcohol. The amount increases with the amount of time the kombucha is allowed to ferment, so this is strictly controlled in a commercial setting and can be experimented with in a home setting. However, because of this low alcohol content, kombucha will help anyone who drinks it to relax.

Healthy

Easily the biggest reason that kombucha has gained popularity is because of its many health benefits. It has a number of probiotics

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which can help with digestive issues, antioxidants which can help remove toxins from your body, and B vitamins which help in a number of ways within your body. It's also low in sugar, calories, and sodium, making it great for people who are trying to lose weight.

Well that's a basic overview of what Kombucha is and why it's gaining notoriety as a miracle elixir for overall health

In the next part we're going to take a look at the history of Kombucha and how it's evolved over time

Let's dive in...

Chapter 1 – History Of Kombucha Tea

Nobody knows for sure how far back kombucha goes, and the truth has been so mixed with legends over the years that it's hard to separate them now. But, we're going to do our best to present you with the history of kombucha tea and how it came all the way from an ancient Chinese medicinal drink to a modern-day health beverage around the world.

First Mention

The first recorded mention of kombucha goes back to 220 BC during the Qin Dynasty in China. It was said to have been used as a drink of immortality for Emperor Qinshi Huangdi. This is likely where it gets the "cha" part of its name as the Chinese word for tea is "cha." The Chinese had many other names for this drink as well such as "stomach treasure," "sea mushroom," and "tea mold."

Dr. Kombu

Supposedly, in the year 414 AD, a Korean doctor by the name of Dr. Kombu brought the drink to Emperor Inyoko of Japan, and this is where the drink gets its name. However, there isn't enough evidence to back up this story, so it could be the stuff of legends. Another story is that Ghengis Khan carried kombucha with him as he traveled.

Russia and Beyond

From Asia, kombucha found its way to Russia as well as Europe, where it not only gained in popularity until the 19th century, but also gained a few more names, such as in Russia where it is referred to as "tea mushroom." According to one account, this beverage saved the life of Aleksander Solzhenitsyn, a Nobel Prize winner, while he was in exile in Siberia.

World War II

Kombucha continued to be popular throughout Europe and Russia until the beginning of World War II. This was because both tea and sugar were rationed and it was too hard for the average citizen to get their hands on enough of them to regularly make the drink. After the war, however, it began to grow again in popularity, and saw a surge in the 1960's when Swiss researchers proved its health benefits.

Chernobyl

In the 1980's, there was a horrific accident near Chernobyl in Russia where a nuclear plant melted down, exposing hundreds of people nearby to radiation. There was a group of people made up primarily of elderly women, however, that survived and did better than the others. It was found by the scientists and doctors that these people regularly drank kombucha.

Modern Popularity

Since the year 2000, kombucha has become a popular health drink throughout the Western world, with people all over Europe, the United States, and Australia enjoying its numerous health benefits. Unfortunately, as many hail this drink as a miracle cure for a number of ailments, others claim it to be dangerous. Because it is created through a natural process and cannot be patented, big companies have little interest in it, which is why there have been few studies done on kombucha to provide completely conclusive evidence one way or the other.

Now that we've uncovered what Kombucha is and the history of this tea, the next thing to do is explain how it's made...more specifically the SCOBY (Mother), which is what we will cover in the next part.

Chapter 2 – The Mother (SCOBY)

What sets kombucha apart from every other health drink out there is the process by which it is made. That process begins with something that is most commonly referred to as SCOBY, but may also be called “kombucha mushrooms” or “kombucha mothers.” These mothers are responsible for the fermentation process that turns tea into kombucha.

What is SCOBY?

SCOBY stands for Symbiotic Culture Of Bacteria and Yeast. During the brewing process, it can be found floating on the top of the kombucha, and is removed before bottling. It is disc-shaped and has a gooey consistency and appearance that is unappealing

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to many people. But, if you want to brew your own kombucha, then you need SCOBY to do it!

Let's break down the different parts of SCOBY.

Symbiotic – This means that there are things working together for mutual benefit. In this case, the bacteria and yeast work together to thrive in the tea and sugar environment and then you get the biggest benefit of kombucha.

Culture – This refers to the microorganisms (bacteria and yeast) that have been allowed to grow so that they can be used for a specific purpose.

Bacteria – The type of bacteria that is found exclusively in kombucha and is unique to it is *Gluconacetobacter kombuchae*. It thrives in the airless environment and feasts on the tea and sugar, turning it into several types of acid that give kombucha its tartness. These bacteria are, of course, beneficial bacteria and shouldn't be confused with the types that cause disease.

Yeast – This is another organism that isn't going to hurt you. *Zygosaccharomyces kombuchaensis* is the type of yeast that is unique to kombucha, and as they consume the sugar, they produce gases as a by-product that give kombucha its signature effervescence.

Bacteria and Yeast Found in SCOBY

In addition to the ones mentioned above that are unique to kombucha, there are a number of other types of bacteria and yeast that can be found in kombucha. All of these work together to create the kombucha as they all produce something different after consuming the tea and sugar. The exact makeup of bacteria and yeast in a SCOBY varies greatly depending on the region they are found in.

Growing Your Own SCOBY

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Brewing your own kombucha starts with having SCOBY.

Fortunately, it's easy to get one. If you have friends that are growing kombucha, you can ask them for a "baby" after their next batch, or you can even order one online. A baby SCOBY is a smaller piece of a larger mother SCOBY, and it will grow into a mother SCOBY after it finishes its first batch of kombucha.

It's important to take good care of your SCOBY since it is made up of living things. You need to make sure it's kept in the right environment at the correct temperature, and that it has plenty of food. By taking good care of your SCOBY, you will have an infinite supply of it and be able to make as much kombucha as you want.

Well that's an introductory to what is needed to make kombucha, in the next chapter we will cover one of the most asked questions and hesitations when looking at drinking Kombucha for health...Is it safe?

Chapter 3 – Is Kombucha Right For Me & Is It Safe

Whenever you're considering putting anything into your body, it's important to take the time to make sure that it's going to benefit you rather than harm you. This is especially important if you decide to make your own kombucha. Store-bought kombucha is often pasteurized and tested to make sure that it's safe, but if you're brewing your own, there are some dangers to consider.

It's a wild ferment.

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That means that you have little to no control over what exactly is growing in your kombucha. Although it's supposed to only contain good bacteria, a surprising number of SCOBY's in homebrewed kombucha have harmful types of bacteria and yeast growing in them, some of which you will end up drinking which can lead to problems.

Because you probably lack the equipment to be testing your own kombucha, you have to be extremely careful about these possible contaminants. These can come from not properly sanitizing a container, touching the SCOBY with unwashed hands, or from unknown environmental factors. If you are worried about keeping your kombucha safe, it might not be for you.

It's a biosorbent.

The SCOBY that's necessary for creating kombucha is a biosorbent, which means it binds to various contaminants and heavy metals. In fact, several studies have shown that SCOBY can be used to clean wastewater of harmful contaminants. What's dangerous about this factor is that those contaminants and heavy metals can find their way into your kombucha.

What's important to keep in mind here is that the SCOBY has to come into contact with these contaminants before it can absorb them, which can happen if it is improperly stored in a container that contains something like lead, or when unfiltered tap water is used. Tap water contains trace amounts of heavy metals that the SCOBY will concentrate over time, leading to possible poisoning.

It Contains Unmeasured Amounts Of Alcohol.

For this reason, children should never drink homebrewed alcohol, since there's no guarantee how much alcohol is in it. Even the commercially-bottled types have some alcohol, so if you do want to give kombucha to your kids, be sure to find one that has the least amount or no alcohol in it. People who are sensitive to alcohol should also avoid homebrewed kombucha for this reason.

It Contains Sugar.

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Although it's true that much of the sugar is eaten by the bacteria and yeast during the fermentation process, it's also true that there is still quite a bit of the sugar remaining in the drink afterwards. If you're trying to eliminate sugar from your diet, then kombucha probably isn't right for you, especially when you brew it yourself and can't know exactly how much sugar is left after fermentation.

Bottom Line

When done properly, kombucha can be safely made at home and enjoyed by everyone in the family. However, when handled casually, you may face some serious consequences. Before you jump into brewing your own kombucha, make sure you're prepared to do what you can to reduce or eliminate these risks.

Now that we've covered the issues that lead to kombucha not being safe to consume, in the next part we will briefly look at some of the benefits of kombucha and whether the truth lives up to the hype

Benefits Of Kombucha & Does It Live Up To The Hype

There are some pretty outrageous claims out there as to what kombucha can do, so it's hard to know for sure what's true and what's been highly exaggerated. We've taken the time to find the benefits of kombucha tea that actually have some backing to them. Since these claims have actually been tested and researched, we're confident that they are true.

1. Probiotics

Probiotics are the good bacteria that help your body in a number of ways. They not only aid in digestion which helps if you have

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stomach issues, but they also help keep bad bacteria numbers low so they can't affect you. Probiotics and good gut health have even been linked to weight loss, but what do these have to do with kombucha?

As you already know, kombucha is created when bacteria and yeast work together to break down the sugars in tea. Many of these healthy bacteria will break off from the SCOBY during the fermentation process and end up in the drink itself. These live healthy bacteria can then thrive in your digestive tract where they can provide you with a number of benefits.

2. Antioxidants

Your body builds up toxins because of everything from cellular activity to eating processed foods and smoking. These toxins damage your body at the cellular level and can cause a number of negative symptoms: fatigue, weight gain, illness, and even cancer. To remove these toxins from your body, you need antioxidants that bind to them and take them out of your body.

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Because kombucha is made from tea which is rich in antioxidants, kombucha itself has a number of these compounds that can help you burn more calories, lower your cholesterol, and help you regulate your blood sugar. This is especially true of kombuchas that are made with green tea, since green tea contains more of these antioxidants than other types of tea.

3. Anti-Bacterial

When you have high levels of bad bacteria in your digestive system, it can lead to a number of health problems, including constipation, anemia, respiratory problems, allergies, high cholesterol, vitamin deficiencies, and hormone imbalances. Many of these are caused when the gut wall is weakened which allows bacteria and other toxins to enter the bloodstream and affect other areas of the body.

However, because of the acetic acid that is present in kombucha, it is good for controlling these bad bacteria and keeping them from causing this host of problems. This acid is also found in vinegar and is produced by the good bacteria in the SCOBY during the fermentation process. By regularly drinking kombucha,

you can regulate the number of bad bacteria to stay healthier and feel better.

Other Benefits of Kombucha Tea

There are several other studies that have been done that indicate that kombucha tea could help with several other health problems, but these are not as well-documented as the previous items on this list. These other benefits include reducing the risk of heart disease, better management of type 2 diabetes, and prevention of some types of cancer.

Well, those are some of the major benefits of kombucha that are well documented, In the last part we will move onto potential side effects...Onward we go!

Side Effects

There are some side effects that can come along with consuming kombucha. Some may be positive while others are negative, so it is important to consume it in moderation to see how it reacts with your system.

Alcohol Buzz

Kombucha contains some alcohol, so if you have a low tolerance, you may experience the effects that you would receive from having a cocktail. Generally, this won't happen with store-bought kombucha as the percentage is less than .05, but it could happen with stronger, home-brewed products.

Improved Digestion

Some people have reported that they benefit from a more regular bathroom schedule after consuming kombucha. This could be because of the healthy bacteria that kombucha introduces to the gut. Of course, this should be monitored and taken in moderation.

Improved Mental State

Because of the high level of B vitamins present in kombucha, it could help to improve your mental state. B12 is known to increase energy levels and to help with mental focus.

Lowered Blood Sugar

Kombucha may be harmful for people with diabetes, contributing to low blood sugar levels, so it is important to monitor this if you have diabetes and drink kombucha.

Yeast Infection

For those who suffer from candida, kombucha may be better avoided due to its high levels of yeast. Although it can help with digestion, it may contribute to an increased likelihood of a yeast infection.

Acidosis

In some cases, people have suffered from acidosis, which is a condition when there is an abnormally high amount of acid in the body. If left untreated, the condition can be fatal.

Liver Damage

A few rare cases have resulted in liver damage. This is more likely if you are an alcoholic or if you have a weakened immune system. The tea can support the growth of certain bacteria and

fungi that can lead to infections if your body is unable to deal with them.

Diarrhea

Because kombucha has caffeine, it may cause diarrhea in people who are sensitive to the substance.

Thanks for reading through to the end of this short report on the truth of Kombucha, it's benefits and side effects

I wish you all the success with making on making an informed decision on whether to make kombucha part of your daily life