

How Much Do You Know About the Benefits of Birds Nest?

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Edible bird's nest is the nest made by the Swiftlet bird of Southeast Asia that is usually prepared as a soup and prized in Chinese culture as a healthful delicacy. Bird's nest has a tradition of use in traditional Chinese medicine for more than 400 years for its aid in respiratory health, energy boosting properties, skin complexion, and general longevity. With many examples of TCM being more than 2000 years old, bird's nest is still relatively new in the culture.

Doctor Hien Duc Pham, OMD, has been a practicing Oriental Chinese Medicine Doctor in Colorado for more than 20 years and he often prescribes bird's nest for his patients. He finds that it is particularly useful with respect to lung health. He discovered that cigarette smokers have experienced benefits. After three weeks of use, smokers have reduced their cravings and improved their oxygen intake.

Bird's nest has also helped patients stop using marijuana. He noticed that marijuana withdrawal discomfort and symptoms were lessened with bird's nest along with other medicinal herbs and ingredients. The application of bird's nest eased the transition from dependency to a clean and sober lifestyle by reducing heat in the brain and reducing the instances of nightmares. Dr. Pham has also prescribed bird's nest for patients with high blood pressure, diabetes, and COPD.

But beyond medical health, Dr. Pham thinks that bird's nest is useful because it brings a sense of general calming and wellness to his patients. Four tablespoons of dry bird's nest cooked into soup creates a cooling effect. Certain seafood, such as crustaceans, can increase blood pressure, creating a yang effect. Swiftlet birds eat crustaceans and process and convert the food to the yin or soothing effect. The purpose of high quality bird's nest is to restore the balance of body function, the *yin* and *yang*, and improve general well being.

Bird's nest has helped reduce depression and suicidal thoughts, aided with better circulation and calmed heat in the brain, brought on by things like nightmares, headaches, and anxiety. Dr. Pham likes to prescribe bird's nest for cancer patients undergoing chemotherapy. He has noted that bird's nest restores the energy zapped by the chemotherapy and prescribes dry bird's nest.

Dr. Pham has also observed that bird's nest restores the sex drive of postmenopausal women over the age of 45. The bird's nest improves the quality of their hair and skin. After 28 days, all of these bodily functions have improved.

Bird's nest is not a cure-all, however, and there are limitations to when the doctor would prescribe it. For example, while a patient has the flu, Dr. Pham would not prescribe bird's nest, but while they are recovering, he would not hesitate, as it can restore general health and promotes well being. He feels similarly about sinus infections. While the phlegm is yellow or green, Dr. Pham would avoid bird's nest. But once the patient begins to heal and the phlegm turns white, he would prescribe it. Traditional Chinese medicines like bird's nest soups are not about reactive health but proactive health and keeping patient's well.

There are a few challenges that consumers may face. Finding high quality bird's nest is one such challenge. Bird's nest is one of the world's most expensive animal products, the bird's nest market is full of imitators who sell fake nests or artificially alter its appearance to make their products seem to be of a more rare and higher quality nest than it is. Consumers should beware of practices such as bleaching the nest because it compromises the quality and potency of this healthful food. That's why it is important to buy a trustworthy brand that gives you a natural bird's nest product so you can enjoy all the health benefits bird's nest offers. Experts who operate herb and Chinese medicine stores can be a terrific resource in identifying the highest quality dry bird's nest and bird's nest drinks.

Another challenge is that preparation of the bird's nest for consumption is a painstaking task. The cooking of bird's nest soup requires attention to detail. The soup cannot be simply microwaved or boiled in a pot on the stove. Another way for consumers to enjoy bird's nest is as a pastry. The preparation of the dry nest is the same, but the delicacy is placed in a dough pastry not unlike chicken potpie. The bird's nest delicacy has also been delightfully consumed as a dessert.

With many OMD and TCM specialists trusting the benefits of bird's nest and the wide array of ways to enjoy it, you owe it to yourself to give bird's nest a try.

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