

## Baker's Yeast

### Overview

Baker's yeast or brewer's yeast is a group of specific strains of single-cell fungus *Saccharomyces cerevisiae*. It is one of the most notable and well-known yeast species beneficial to our health. Living yeast is widely used as brewing ales and baking whereas dried, deactivated yeast is often added in dietary supplement for its high nutritional value of protein, chromium, B vitamins and selenium<sup>1</sup>.



Baker's yeast is used in alternative medicine to help in digestion and other health conditions including maintaining intestinal function, anti-ulceration and anti-allergy.

### Key indications



#### Antioxidant

Clinical study reported taking single dose of 500mg of specific brewer's yeast preparation enhanced antioxidant protection at two hours after intake as measured by the cell-based antioxidant protection in erythrocytes (CAP-e) assay<sup>2</sup>.



#### Blood glucose management

Baker's yeast consists of a form of chromium known as glucose tolerance factor (GTC). GTC has been shown to improve insulin response in the body. Daily consumption of 1.8g of baker's yeast for 12 weeks resulted in 9% drop in blood sugar level in those with type-II diabetes<sup>7</sup>. Blood pressure was improved in people with type-II diabetes in another study with daily consumption dose of 1.8g of baker's yeast<sup>5</sup>.



#### Irritable bowel syndrome (IBS)

IBS is known as a digestive disorder often resulted in abdominal discomfort, flatulence, diarrhea and constipation. Several gastrointestinal symptoms including abdominal pain, discomfort and bloating were significantly improved in the 2<sup>nd</sup> month of supplementation of 500mg to 1000mg (8 billion cfu/g) of baker's yeast in IBS patients compared to placebo in a review study<sup>4</sup>.



#### Immune health

Beta-glucans extracted from the cell walls of baker's yeast can help to improve the innate immune system through enhancing the role of key white blood cells in identifying and killing potential pathogens. This makes immune cells react more quickly and effectively in infection<sup>3</sup>.

## Adverse effects<sup>6</sup>

Baker's yeast is generally well-tolerated in most people. In some cases, the commonly reported adverse effects are stomach upset, flatulence, migraine-like headaches. It may cause fungemia in certain people.

## Dosage range<sup>6</sup>

Typical doses used in clinical trials is ranging from 500mg to 1,000mg daily or 4 to 8 billion colony-forming units daily up to 12 weeks.

## Contraindications/cautions<sup>6</sup>

- Precaution to consider if one has yeast allergy. Yeast allergy symptoms include chest pain, throat or chest tightness, or difficulty breathing.
- Interaction may occur with these drugs and supplements:
  - **Antidiabetic drugs, herbs and supplements**  
It might increase risk of hypoglycaemia
  - **Lithium**  
It might cause additive effects and side effects
  - **Monoamine oxidase inhibitors**  
It might promote the risk of hypertension
  - **Crohn's disease**  
It might worsen the condition
  - **Immunodeficiency (underwent organ transplant or advanced HIV)**  
It might trigger a fungal infection
- Safety data on pregnancy and lactation has not been established.

### References:

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