

# Fountain of Youth Rediscovered?

## Colostrum As An Anti-Aging Agent

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Much of the search for youth has focused on the superficial effects of aging – greying hair, wrinkles, and reduced endurance. However, aging is far more than the physical changes in our body's appearance. While "feeling old" may be a state of mind as well as a set of physical sensations, the aging process itself is a biological one. No matter how young we feel, our body goes through physiological changes as we get older. These changes bring about a decline in our ability to fight disease and infection. They also affect our central nervous system and alter our cellular structures, which, in turn, affect our muscles, skin, and skeletal form. Research is increasingly pointing to the ability of colostrum to help tackle some of the changes that occur in our bodies as they age.

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### Colostrum: The Anti-Aging Connection

While changes due to aging in our cells, muscles and immune system sound like a series of irreversible processes, they can be slowed with colostrum because of the growth factors it contains. Among its myriad of ingredients, colostrum contains:

**Natural antibiotic factors (immunoglobulins)** – substances that neutralise toxins, viruses, and bacteria, particularly in the digestive and respiratory systems. **Cytokines** – small proteins that affect the behaviour of other cells, **lactoferrin** – a substance that neutralises bacteria and helps release cytokines and **growth factors** – substances that aid in cellular, muscular and skeletal growth.

### Immunoglobulins

Immunoglobulins, or antibodies, specifically recognise any foreign compound that enters the body. When one enters, various antibodies direct themselves to different areas of the invader and attack, wherever it is in the body. Over our lifetime, we are exposed to a variety of foreign substances and normally have built a vast array of antibody-producing lymphocytes (more

than 100 million by some estimates) that persist at low levels, for years. Their goal is to surface again if we are exposed to the same substance. The immune system is able to remember with what it has been infected, and often can prevent us from being infected again. This is the premise upon which vaccines work.

### Growth Factors

Although there are clearly many ingredients in colostrum that are of utmost importance, perhaps it is the growth factors that hold the most promise in slowing the aging process. Growth factors stimulate our skeletal and muscle growth on a cellular level while regulating our metabolism.

Children need these growth factors to flourish. If they are absent, then growth-hormone therapy is prescribed.

Researchers found that GH replacement in adults with growth hormone deficiencies resulted in markedly beneficial alterations in body composition, fat distribution, and bone and mineral metabolism.

Growth hormone helps our long bones, joints and muscles grow. As we age, we create less GH, and we tend to experience osteoporosis and less lean muscle mass. Yet, several studies conclude that GH treatment could prevent some signs of aging.

Taking colostrum provides us with essential growth factors, immune factors, antibiotic factors, vitamins, minerals and antioxidants. It is a whole and complete food and/or supplement. Each of the growth factors in colostrum helps stimulate cell and tissue growth by activating DNA formation. Unlike other supplements that provide only single growth factors, colostrum combines a complete package of growth factors that work together synergistically, as nature intended. Most of the anti-aging effects of GH therapy are a result of increasing the body's concentration of IgF1 and IgF2. IgF1 and IgF2 are the most active ingredients found in colostrum. They tell the body how to use the fat, sugar, and protein that it gets from food. They also control how cells grow and repair themselves. Studies have shown that taking bovine colostrum by mouth can increase the body's IgF1 levels.

### Cytokines

Cytokines act as anti-inflammatories and help boost the production of other immunoglobulins. As we grow older, however, our cytokine production is reduced by a significant extent. It also seems that cytokines might be responsible for regulating our immunological and metabolic responses.

Thus, as we age, we produce, and have access to, less of the essential substances that we need to maintain our health.

### The Importance of a Healthy Digestive Environment

The digestive tract is the source of a vast majority of our body's immunity. Simply stated, if our intestine is unusually permeable, then bacteria, viruses and other toxins may enter the bloodstream. This can lead to inflammation, food allergies, and a malabsorption of minerals. Some of the more common culprits causing a leaky gut include the use of non-steroidal anti-inflammatories (NSAIDs), antibiotics, birth control pills, caffeine, and alcohol.

The result of a leaky gut is a compromised immune system. Research has shown that colostrum can help maintain a healthy digestive environment and can prevent the development of a leaky gut. Moreover, the growth factors in colostrum play a key role by keeping the intestinal mucosal sealed and impermeable to toxins. Colostrum has been shown to prevent gastro-intestinal tract injury caused by NSAIDs. It has been shown to provide the ingredients we need to help with nutrient absorption. In essence, colostrum's immune and growth factors help repair the damaged intestinal walls.

### Colostrum's Future Impact

Research now underway is expected to yield even more concrete data about the impact colostrum has on our lives. Just a partial list of the ways colostrum can potentially help us achieve and maintain optimum health and slow the aging process includes:

- **rheumatoid arthritis** – because colostrum can reduce inflammation.
- **osteoarthritis and osteoporosis** – because colostrum helps to build bone density.
- **transplantation** – immunoglobulins in colostrum could help reduce infection with fungus and bacteria.
- **cancer fighters** – the cytokines in colostrum include the powerful interleukins.
- **slowing of HIV** – colostrum can help reduce the infectious pathogens that cause related conditions.

