

Freshly crushed garlic better for the heart than processed

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Freshly crushed garlic is better for the heart than dried garlic, scientists are reporting. Credit: Wikimedia Commons

A new study reports what scientists term the first scientific evidence that freshly crushed garlic has more potent heart-healthy effects than dried garlic. Scheduled for the Aug. 12 issue of the *Journal of Agricultural and Food Chemistry*, it also challenges the widespread belief that most of garlic's benefits are due to its rich array of antioxidants. Instead, garlic's heart-healthy effects seem to result mainly from hydrogen sulfide, a chemical signaling substance that forms after garlic is cut or crushed and relaxes blood vessels when eaten.

In the study, Dipak K. Das and colleagues point out that raw, crushed garlic generates [hydrogen sulfide](#) through a chemical reaction. Although best known as the stuff that gives rotten eggs their distinctive odor,

hydrogen sulfide also acts as a chemical messenger in the body, relaxing blood vessels and allowing more blood to pass through. Processed and cooked garlic, however, loses its ability to generate hydrogen sulfide.

The scientists gave freshly crushed garlic and processed garlic to two groups of lab rats, and then studied how well the animals' hearts recovered from simulated heart attacks. "Both crushed and processed garlic reduced damage from lack of oxygen, but the fresh garlic group had a significantly greater effect on restoring good [blood](#) flow in the aorta and increased pressure in the left ventricle of the heart," Das said.

More information: "Freshly crushed garlic is a superior cardioprotective agent than processed [garlic](#)"; *Journal of Agricultural and Food Chemistry*

Source: American Chemical Society ([news](#) : [web](#))

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