

nourishing BONE BROTHS

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Chances are, if you've ever been sick, someone told you to eat chicken soup. Chances are you've also heard about the rising popularity of *bone broths*. Perhaps you've even tried them out yourself. But what's with all the hype? It's true, these foods have traditionally been used as medicine, and there is even science to back it up. Read on for a little history and understanding of why these foods should remain a nourishing staple in your diet.

A bone-ified history lesson

Bone broths date back to the stone ages when hot rocks were literally inserted into the body cavities of dead animals. They were a way to utilize the whole animal, and to extract nutrients from parts that nowadays some of us might discard. Bone broths can be consumed as a drink, a full meal, or as a base for other soups/sauces/meat dishes.

These broths have a strong and ancient history in many traditions worldwide. Cultures as widespread as China, Japan, Korea, France, Italy, countries in Eastern Europe, the Caribbean, Africa, and the Middle East have eaten soups and broths over the ages. Nowadays, these broths have been made trendy with the growing popularity of diets like Paleo and GAPS (Gut and Psychology Syndrome).

The terms 'bone broth', 'broth', and 'stock', are often used interchangeably. However, Jennifer McGruther, food educator and author of *The Nourished Kitchen* and *Broth and Stock*, differentiates between them as such:

"Broth is typically made with meat and can contain a small amount of bones (think of the bones in a fresh whole chicken). Broth is typically simmered for a short period of time (45 minutes to 2 hours). It is very light in flavor, thin in texture and rich in protein.

Stock is typically made with bones and can contain a small amount of meat (think of the meat that adheres to a beef neck bone). Often the bones are roasted before simmering them as this greatly improves the flavor. Stock is typically simmered for a moderate amount of time (3 to 4 hours). Stock is a good source of gelatin.

Bone broth is typically made with bones and can contain a small amount of meat adhering to the bones. As with stock, bones are typically roasted first to improve flavor. Bone broths are usually simmered for a very long period of time (often in excess of 24 hours), with the purpose being not only to produce gelatin from collagen-rich joints, but also to release minerals from the bones."

Excerpted from: www.nourishedkitchen.com/bone-broth

But are bone broths really *that* nutritious? The answer—Yes! The inclusion of bones and acid (vinegar, wine, or tomato paste) and the long slow cooking time extracts a variety of healing nutrients. A true bone broth contains skin, bones, and cartilage which, when cooked, release collagen and marrow and produce gelatin—an important gut-healing nutrient. This cooking method also frees up multiple minerals and amino acids in a form that is readily assimilated and utilized by the body. Bone broths have been shown to contain high amounts of calcium, magnesium, phosphorus, potassium, silicon, sulfur and other trace minerals. In addition, they contain large amounts of the amino acids glycine, proline, and arginine. All of these nutrients benefit the respiratory tract, intestinal tract, aid with detoxification, protect joints, and help build calming neurotransmitters. WOW! These nutrients have also been shown to be helpful aids with specific medical conditions such as anemia, diabetes, cancer, and more. Chicken soup has even been shown to slow inflammation caused by immune cells during a cold!

Nutritious and delicious?!

Bone broths are packed with flavour. Umami is the name given to the meaty taste they contain. Umami is also found in some hard cheeses, tomatoes, mushrooms, soy sauce, fish sauce, and other fermented foods. It's the taste that helps to create pleasure in eating, and satisfaction with a meal. This is why these broths make a fantastic base for other sauces and dishes.

What I love about soups and broths is that when finished, they contain a variety of vegetables, proteins, and whole grains (all things I encourage my child to eat). They also represent 'passive cooking' because many of them stay on the stove or the slow cooker for hours to days, leaving more time for playing with little ones. They can feed large groups and generally freeze well. At any given time I have some chicken broth, miso, or lentil soup portions in my freezer for a rainy or flu-ish day.

Now that the weather has turned chilly, and the days have gotten shorter, this is the perfect time to focus our diets on grounding, warming cooked foods like soups and broths. These dishes are particularly helpful for when our immune systems are sluggish. They offer nutrition, soothe digestion, and hydrate all at the same time. These foods are also a win with most little ones and get them consuming immune boosting vegetables and herbs that they may otherwise reject. So check out Dr. Heidi's recipes and whip up a nutritious bowl of comfort food today! •

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