

Ready to start planning your care? Call us at [800-525-2225](tel:800-525-2225) to make an appointment.

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Cancer Center

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FOR THE MEDIA

Evidence on royal jelly in humans is limited, with no clear benefit for conditions like diabetes or heart disease.

Royal jelly is a viscous substance secreted by worker bees that makes up the essential food for queen bees and their larvae. It is consumed as a health food around the world. Preclinical studies suggest royal jelly may reduce blood pressure, cholesterol levels, and inflammation. However, studies in humans are quite limited and do not provide adequate evidence of benefit.

Because lab studies identified some estrogenic activity with royal jelly, it should not be used by patients with hormone-sensitive cancers.

What are the potential uses and benefits?

- Cholesterol management

Some research suggests benefit, but evidence is very limited.

- Diabetes

A few small studies suggest it may improve some markers of type 2 diabetes, but a meta-analysis determined it does not improve glucose levels and quality of evidence is generally low.

- Menopausal symptoms

Preliminary data suggest royal jelly may help improve some symptoms.

- Mucositis

In patients receiving radiotherapy and chemotherapy, royal jelly along with standard mouthwash therapy improved symptoms of oral mouth sores and healing time. Confirmatory studies are needed.

What are the side effects?

- Anecdotal weight gain, face rash, gastrointestinal discomfort.

Case reports

- Allergic reactions
- Asthma
- Bloody diarrhea

What else do I need to know?

Do Not Take if:

- You are allergic to bee products: Several cases of allergic reactions have been reported. For this reason, [propolis](#) should also be avoided.
- You have estrogen receptor-positive breast cancer: Lab studies identified some estrogenic activity with royal jelly.
- You are taking blood thinners such as warfarin: A case report suggests royal jelly may enhance medication effects and possibly increase bleeding.

If you have questions or concerns, contact your healthcare provider. A member of your care team will answer Monday through Friday from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Outside those hours, you can leave a message or talk with another MSK provider. There is always a doctor or nurse on call. If you're not sure how to reach your healthcare provider, call 212-639-2000.

For more resources, visit www.mskcc.org/pe to search our virtual library.

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