

Letter to Editor

Retrospective user survey of JUNSAIKOMACHI for improving human health and skin conditions

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Dear editor,

We previously reported the improved effects of JUNSAIKOMACHI, a stick jelly-type dietary supplement with water shield extract and dried sake cake on bowel movement and skin conditions of healthy adult females using placebo-controlled double-blind and open-label trials ¹⁻³. Clarification of why users purchase JUNSAIKOMACHI and whether they have felt the beneficial effects demonstrated in our previous studies is important and useful for product promotion. In this study, we distributed a questionnaire to JUNSAIKOMACHI subscribers regarding their subjective evaluation of health and skin conditions.

The consumer survey of effects on health and skin conditions was approved by the ethics committee of Akita Research Institute of Food and Brewing (Approval No. H30-01). The questionnaires on 29 symptoms of health and skin conditions were distributed to users of JUNSAIKOMACHI who have subscribed to the dietary supplement for over 4 months via online shopping sites or at physical stores. The users' subjective reports of JUNSAIKOMACHI were assessed by visual analogue scores (VAS), as in our previous open-label study ³, and the VAS sheets were mailed back anonymously. The statistical analysis of VAS for each symptom

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before/after administration was performed using the Wilcoxon signed rank test (GraphPad Prism5, GraphPad Software Inc.). A value of $p < 0.05$ was considered significant

Ten females in their 30s (1 user), 40s (6 users), 50s (2 users) and 60s (1 user), and one male in his 30s replied to this survey, and the results are summarized in Table 1. The continuous intake of JUNSAIKOMACHI markedly improved "bowel movement", but it did not affect other health conditions. The four skin conditions "dry skin", "skin texture", "elasticity and/or gloss of skin" and "noticeable pores" markedly improved between before/after administration, and subscribers felt positive effects in "dull skin" ($p=0.063$) and "makeup application" ($p=0.058$).

In the retrospective user survey, improved effects of JUNSAIKOMACHI on health/skin conditions, such as "bowel movement", "dry skin" and "noticeable pores", were consistent with the results of our previous double-blind and open-label trials ^{2,3}. Furthermore, users may subscribe to JUNSAIKOMACHI to care for their skin conditions rather than health conditions.

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Table 1 Effects of JUNSAIKOMACHI on Health and Skin Conditions

	VAS (mm)		p-value
	Before subscription	Current status	
Health condition			
Stiff neck	33.5±7.2	33.5±7.2	ns
Tired eyes	38.2±4.7	38.3±4.7	ns
Appetite	47.9±4.7	52.9±5.0	ns
Falling asleep	64.2±7.8	66.9±6.2	ns
Malaise	53.1±6.4	55.5±6.2	ns
Waist circumference	39.5±5.4	45.9±6.9	ns
Foot swelling	33.5±7.2	33.5±7.2	ns
Bowel movement	49.2±7.6	77.9±5.2	0.002
Dry eye	52.3±7.4	55.6±7.3	ns
Sensitivity to cold	47.1±7.4	51.2±7.2	ns
Up/down a staircase	57.0±5.5	58.3±5.2	ns
Thirst	58.0±5.1	58.7±4.8	ns
Blurred vision	39.7±6.7	40.2±6.5	ns
Flabby upper arm	39.5±3.6	42.0±3.9	ns
Skin condition			
Dull skin	41.2±2.7	51.1±5.8	ns
Dry skin	33.2±5.0	49.3±5.6	0.023
Skin texture	40.3±3.4	49.2±6.0	0.032
Elasticity and/or gloss of skin	40.6±2.7	50.8±5.6	0.036
Rough skin	39.0±4.9	50.7±5.5	ns
Desiccated and gritty skin	47.0±6.8	55.6±6.4	ns
Oily face	52.5±5.2	54.4±5.2	ns
Frequent pimples	54.5±4.2	55.5±6.2	ns
Spots and freckles	45.8±6.7	48.7±7.2	ns
Noticeable pores	32.3±6.0	47.0±6.5	0.008
Makeup application	45.1±3.8	54.5±3.6	ns
Corners of mouth sagging	42.7±4.0	43.5±4.1	ns
Fine lines around eyes	42.5±5.1	43.9±5.8	ns
Cheeks sagging	44.5±3.0	47.0±2.4	ns
Make-up runs easily	50.7±4.1	53.4±4.4	ns

The data represents means ± SEM (n=11). Ns, not significant vs before subscription.

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