# What is Kombucha and Should I be Drinking It?

Kombucha has taken the world by storm in recent years, but most people aren’t exactly sure what it is. The history of the drink is somewhat ambiguous, with some estimates putting its origins as recently as 200 years ago but others claiming that it goes back several thousand years. Most experts agree that it was first created in Northeastern China, and evidence shows that it has been consumed in Russia since the early 1900s. If you’re interested in learning about Kombucha, continue below for more information.

*What is Kombucha?*

Kombucha is an effervescent tea that is produced through the process of fermentation. Generally, black or green tea is fermented using SCOBY, which stands for symbiotic culture of bacteria and yeast. The bacteria are used to oxidize the alcohols that are formed by the yeast, creating acetic acids.

The SCOBY is introduced to a broth of sugared green or black tea. This causes a reaction that creates gluconic and acetic acid, both substances that are present in the final concoction. The process also creates enzymes, amino acids, and ethanol, as well as B vitamins and vitamin C. The alcoholic content is generally less than 1% but that can increase with more fermentation.

*Health Claims*

Proponents of kombucha have made many claims about the health benefits of the fermented beverage. One of the most common claims among commercially sold kombucha brands is that it can help increase good gut bacteria, leading to improved digestion and overall better health. Others have made claims that suggest that kombucha has properties that cure asthma, diabetes, gout, herpes, and even cancer.

Currently, there is not much scientific evidence that supports a direct link between kombucha consumption and improved overall health. Some correlations suggest that the cultures can act similarly to probiotics, and there is certainly anecdotal evidence of relief in some people who have suffered from digestive issues. However, these anecdotes do not constitute enough proof to definitively say that kombucha can fix your gut health.

*Negative Effects*

There have been a handful of adverse effects reported in relation to kombucha consumption, but they are generally isolated and mild. A handful of people have suffered from liver and kidney toxicity after consuming kombucha. This could be due to the minimal presence of alcohol or the high level of acidity, which has also lead to acidosis in some individuals. There is only one reported fatality that has been linked with kombucha, but there is no conclusive evidence that the beverage was the cause of the death.

*Should You Drink Kombucha*

Many people enjoy the flavor and carbonated mouthfeel of kombucha, and most evidence suggests that it is not likely to harm you. However, you shouldn’t rely on the drink to fix any specific ailments you may have, as there is no proof that it is really a miracle worker. If you enjoy kombucha, you should have no problem with consuming it in moderation. Some people may feel better after drinking it, so there is no harm in trying.