

Sunflower Seeds

What Are Sunflower Seeds?

The sunflower seed is considered the fruit of the sunflower, consisting of edible kernels surrounded by a black shell. The seeds are pressed to extract their oil or dehulled and roasted or consumed as a popular snack. They can also be added to salads, bars, breakfast bowls and desserts to give dishes a crunchy and satisfying twist. They can also be used to produce sunflower butter, a popular allergy-friendly alternative to nut butters made from **peanuts** or almonds.

So are sunflower seeds good for you? Sunflower seeds are loaded with many important nutrients and have been associated with a number of health benefits. In particular, studies show that the nutrients and compounds found in sunflower seeds could reduce the risk of heart disease, fight against cancer, improve thyroid function and keep blood sugar steady. And best of all, sunflower seeds are delicious and versatile, making it easy to add them into a healthy and well-rounded diet.

Benefits of Sunflower Seeds

1. Reduce Risk of Heart Disease
2. May Help Fight Against Cancer
3. Support Thyroid Function
4. Combat Bone Loss and Muscle Cramps
5. Balance Blood Sugar Levels
6. Promote Skin Health

Sunflower Seeds Nutrition Facts

Take a look at the sunflower seeds nutrition profile and it's easy to see why it's considered one of the most nutrient-dense foods on the planet. Although there are relatively few calories in sunflower seeds, each serving packs in a serious punch of micronutrients like vitamin E, thiamine, manganese and copper.

Delicious Ways to Eat Sunflower Seeds

1. Spicy Roasted Sunflower Seeds

Ingredients:

- 1 cup shelled raw sunflower seeds
- 1-2 tsp. olive oil
- pinches of cayenne, sea salt and pepper

Directions:

Preheat oven to 350 degrees Fahrenheit.

Toss seeds with oil, and then add cayenne, salt and pepper. Spread the seeds in a single layer on a baking sheet. Bake 20-25 minutes, tossing the pan frequently so the seeds don't burn. Cool and enjoy.

2. Sunflower Pesto**Ingredients:**

- 2 cups packed fresh basil leaves
- 2 cloves garlic, crushed
- $\frac{2}{3}$ cup extra virgin olive oil
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup shelled sunflower seeds
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup grated Parmesan

Directions:

Puree all ingredients in a food processor until smooth. Serve with pasta, crusty bread, or white beans.

3. No-Bake Sunflower Energy Balls**Ingredients:**

- 1 cup rolled oats
- $\frac{2}{3}$ cup unsweetened coconut flakes
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup raw sunflower seeds, coarsely ground
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup smooth natural peanut butter
- $\frac{1}{3}$ cup mini dark chocolate chips
- $\frac{1}{3}$ cup honey
- 1 tsp. vanilla

Directions:

Combine all ingredients in a medium mixing bowl. Scoop and mash the mixture with the back of a spoon until they are well-combined.

Chill for 30 minutes or more.

Using your hands, roll the dough into balls about one inch in diameter. Chill until ready to serve.

4. Sunflower Veggie Sliders**Ingredients:**

2 cups raw sunflower seeds, ground into flour.

1 cup grated carrots

1 cup diced celery

1 cup diced onion
1 1/4 cups organic crushed tomatoes
1 Tbls. soy sauce or tamari
2 cloves garlic, crushed
1 Tbls. ground flaxseeds

Directions:

Preheat oven to 350 degrees Fahrenheit, and line a large baking sheet with parchment paper. Combine all ingredients well and form into small patties, ¼-½ cup at a time. Bake 30-35 minutes. Flip, and bake 15 minutes more.

Pumpkin Seeds

What Are Pumpkin Seeds?

Pumpkin seeds—also known as pepitas—are flat, dark green seeds. Some are encased in a yellow-white husk (often called the "shell"), although some varieties of pumpkins produce seeds without shells. Pumpkin seeds have a malleable, chewy texture and a subtly sweet, nutty flavor. While roasted pumpkins seeds are probably best known for their role as a perennial Halloween treat, these seeds are so delicious and nutritious, that they can be enjoyed throughout the year. In many food markets, pepitas are available in all of the forms described above—raw and shelled, raw and unshelled, roasted and shelled, roasted and unshelled.

Like cantaloupe, watermelon, cucumber, and squash, pumpkins and pumpkin seeds belong to the gourd or *Cucurbitaceae* family. Within this family, the genus *Cucurbita* contains all of the pumpkins (and their seeds). The most common species of pumpkin used as a source of pumpkin seeds are *Cucurbita pepo*, *Cucurbita maxima*, *Cucurbita moschata*, and *Cucurbita mixta*.

Health Benefits of Pumpkin Seeds

1. Antioxidant Support
2. Mineral Support
3. Diabetes
4. Antimicrobial Benefits
5. Cancer-Related Benefits
6. Mineral support
7. Prevents Diabetes
8. Antimicrobial Benefits
9. Cancer Related Benefits
10. Anti Inflammatory Benefits
11. Plant – Based Omega-3 Fats
12. Prostate Health

13. Benefits to women during Postmenopausal phase
14. Health & Liver Health
15. Restful Sleep

Nutritional Facts:-

"Pumpkin seeds are nutritional powerhouses because they are an excellent source of protein, healthy fat and beneficial fibers. These wonder seeds can be used as nutritional snacks for both men and women. They are ideal snacks because they fill your stomach for a longer duration. They suppress hunger pangs as each 100 grams provides almost 50% of daily protein requirement. These seeds are source of valuable nutrients like zinc, magnesium, manganese, copper, antioxidants and phytosterols."

Delicious Ways to Eat Pumpkin Seeds

1. Pesto with Toasted Pumpkin Seeds

Ingredients:

- 1/2 cup loosely packed fresh cilantro leaves
- 1/2 cup loosely packed fresh flat-leaf parsley
- 2 garlic cloves
- 1/4 cup (1 oz.) freshly grated Parmesan cheese
- 2 tablespoons pumpkin seeds, toasted
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 1/4 cup olive oil

Preparation:

Pulse first 6 ingredients in a food processor 10 times or just until chopped. Drizzle olive oil over mixture, and pulse 6 more times or until a coarse mixture forms. Cover and chill until ready to serve.

2. Sugared Pecans & Pepitas

Ingredients:

- 1 cup pecan halves and pieces
- 1/2 cup roasted, salted shelled pumpkin seeds
- 2 tablespoons butter, melted
- 2 tablespoons sugar

Preparation:

Preheat oven to 350°. Stir together pecan halves and pieces, pepitas, and melted butter. Spread in a single layer in a 13- x 9-inch pan. Bake 12 to 15 minutes or until toasted and

fragrant, stirring halfway through. Remove from oven; toss with sugar. Cool completely in pan on a wire rack (about 30 minutes).

3. Spicy Chile Peanuts & Pepitas

Ingredients:

- 2 cups unsalted, dry-roasted peanuts
- 2 tablespoons butter, melted
- 2 tablespoons light brown sugar
- 2 teaspoons chili powder
- 1/2 teaspoon ground cinnamon
- 1/4 teaspoon ground red pepper
- 1 cup roasted, salted shelled pumpkin seeds

Preparation:

1. Preheat oven to 350°. Stir together peanuts and melted butter in a medium bowl. 2. Stir together brown sugar and next 3 ingredients. Add to peanut mixture, tossing to coat. Place peanuts in a single layer on a lightly greased baking sheet. 3. Bake at 350° for 10 to 15 minutes or until golden brown, stirring once. Remove from oven, and stir in pumpkin seeds. Cool completely in pan on a wire rack (about 20 minutes).

4. Pumpkin Biscotti

Ingredients:

- 1 cup shelled, raw pumpkin seeds
- 1 cup sugar
- 6 tablespoons butter, softened
- 1 cup canned pumpkin
- 2 large eggs
- 3 1/2 cups all-purpose baking mix
- 1 tablespoon pumpkin pie spice

Preparation:

Preheat oven to 325°. Bake pumpkin seeds in a single layer in a shallow pan 8 to 10 minutes or until toasted and fragrant, stirring halfway through. Cool 10 minutes. 2. Meanwhile, beat sugar and butter at medium speed with an electric mixer until creamy. Stir in canned pumpkin. Add eggs, 1 at a time, beating until blended after each addition. Add baking mix and pumpkin pie spice, beating until blended. 3. Gently fold pumpkin seeds into sugar mixture. Cover and freeze 1 hour or until firm. 4. Divide dough in half. Shape each portion into a 12- x 3-inch slightly flattened log on a lightly greased baking sheet, using lightly floured hands. 5. Bake at 325° for 35 minutes or until firm. Transfer

to wire racks; cool completely (about 1 hour). Cut each log diagonally into 3/4-inch-thick slices with a serrated knife, using a gentle sawing motion. Place on greased baking sheets. 6. Bake at 325° for 20 minutes; turn cookies over, and bake 20 more minutes. Transfer to wire racks; cool completely (about 30 minutes). Store in airtight containers up to 4 days.

Flaxseed

What Is Flaxseed?

Flaxseeds, sometimes called linseeds, are small, brown, tan or golden-colored seeds. In fact, linseed or “flax seed” are different names for the same seed. Flaxseeds are a great source of dietary fiber; minerals like manganese, thiamine and magnesium; and **plant-based protein**.

Flax is one of the richest sources of plant-based **omega-3 fatty acids**, called alpha-linoleic acid (or ALA), in the world. Another unique fact about flaxseeds is that they are the No. 1 source of lignans in the human diets; flaxseed contains about seven times as many lignans as the closest runner-up, **sesame seeds**.

Benefits of Flaxseed

1. High in Fiber But Low in Carbs
2. High in Omega-3 Fatty Acids
3. Helps Make Skin and Hair Healthy
4. Helps Lower Cholesterol and Treat Hyperlipidemia
5. Gluten-Free
6. High in Antioxidants (Lignans)
7. Supports Digestive Health

Flaxseed Nutrition Facts

When you look at the nutritional benefits of flaxseed, there are many things that will catch your attention. In fact, flaxseed’s nutrition profile makes it one of the most nutrient-dense foods on the planet.

According to the USDA’s National Nutrient Database, supplementation with two tablespoons of whole/unground flaxseed (considered about one serving) contains about.

Flaxseeds also contain a good amount of vitamin B6, folate, iron, potassium and zinc. As you can see, it’s no secret as to where the benefits of flaxseed come from with this nutrition profile.

Delicious Ways to Eat Flaxseed

1. Flaxseed Smoothie

Ingredients:

- 2 Tbsp. flaxseeds
- 1 cup flavored soya milk
- 1 cup chilled and roughly chopped strawberries
- 1/2 cup chilled and roughly chopped bananas
- 2 tsp. honey
- Garnish: 2 strawberries and 2 bananas slices

Method:

1. Add strawberries, bananas, flaxseeds and honey in soya milk, blend in a juicer till the mixture is smooth and frothy.
2. Pour equal quantities of the smoothie into 2 individual glasses.
3. Serve garnished with a strawberry and banana slice.

2. Flaxseed Raita**Ingredients:**

- 1 cup bottle gourd, thickly grated
- 1 cup low-fat curd, freshly beaten
- 1/2 cup mint leaves, finely chopped (*pudina*)
- 1/4 tsp roasted cumin seeds (*jeera*)
- 1/4 tsp black salt
- 1 1/2 tbsps roasted and coarsely ground flaxseeds Salt to taste

Method:

1. Combine the bottle guard with one cup of water. Cover and cook on a medium flame for 4 minutes.
2. Combine all the ingredients, including the cooked bottle gourd in a deep bowl and mix well.
3. Refrigerate for at least 1 hour and serve chilled.

Chia Seeds

What Are Chia Seeds?

Chia seeds (*Salvia hispanica*) have become one of the most popular superfoods in the health community. Hailing from a species of flowering plant in the mint family, chia seeds are native to areas of Mexico and Guatemala but are commonly cultivated in many areas in North and South America.

These tasty seeds are easy to digest when prepared properly and can be a very versatile ingredient that works well in a variety of recipes. Plus, they offer a long list of important

nutrients, including fiber, protein, manganese and calcium, along with plenty of antioxidants and **omega-3 fatty acids**.

Not only that, but recent research has found that the chia seeds benefits are even greater than scientists initially realized. Chia seeds health benefits include promoting healthy skin, reducing signs of aging, supporting the heart and digestive system, building stronger bones, and more.

Benefits Chia Seeds

1. Support Healthy Skin
2. Promote Digestive Health
3. Improve Heart Health
4. Balance Blood Sugar
5. Boost Energy and Exercise Performance
6. Build Stronger Bones
7. Aid in Weight Loss
8. Fight Cancer Growth
9. Enhance Oral Health

Chia Seed Nutrition Facts

Take a look at the chia seeds nutrition facts, and it's easy to tell why they're so good for you. Each serving contains a small amount of chia seeds calories but is rich in protein, fiber, manganese, phosphorus and calcium. Plus, chia seeds also contain omega-3 fatty acids and other important micronutrients and antioxidants that are important to health as well. This explains why there are so many chia seeds benefits.

One ounce (about 28 grams) of chia seeds contains approximately:

In addition to the nutrients listed above, chia seeds also contain several essential fatty acids; vitamins A, B, E and D; and minerals, such as iron, iodine, magnesium, niacin and thiamine

Delicious Ways to Eat Chia Seed

There are tons of **chia seed recipes** out there, making it easy to take advantage of all the wonderful chia seeds benefits available. We're talking everything from **chia pudding** to smoothies, baked goods, bars and other delicious healthy eating recipes as well.

Need a little inspiration? Here are a few tasty chia seeds recipes to get you started:

1. Chia Pudding

If puddings are your go-to desserts, there's no better way to make them healthier than by adding some chia seeds. Add chia seeds to your pudding to get a thicker texture. Then, top it up with milk, yogurt or cocoa. You can even add fresh fruits. If you don't like seeds in the pudding, you can blend chia seeds with the other ingredients to get a creamy consistency.

2. Chia Smoothie

Make smoothies and add chia seeds to give it a nutritious twist. Be it a mango smoothie, banana smoothie or an apple smoothie, you can add a tablespoon of chia seeds to make it more filling.

3. Baked in Cakes

Baking a cake at home? Throw in some chia seeds! For instance, a banana and chia tea cake makes for a perfect healthy evening snack.

4. Chia Seeds in Oatmeal

If you are looking for a healthy breakfast recipe, add some chia seeds to a bowl of oats with milk or coconut milk.

5. Chia Seeds in Yogurt

Chia seeds are great as a topping. If you like to add some crunch to your bowl of yogurt, sprinkle two teaspoons of these seeds.

6. Added to Tea

If you are not in the mood to add them in your meal, try them in your cup of tea. While preparing the tea, add one teaspoon of chia seeds and let it rest for a minute or two till they are well-soaked.

7. Added in Lemonades

Chia seeds in lemonades? Well yes, chia seeds in your homemade lemonade can add a nice texture to the beverage.

Quinoa

Quinoa (pronounced keen-wah) and other ancient grains, such as amaranth, barley, and farro are rapidly growing in popularity because of their wide array of health benefits.

Ancient grains are referred to as such because they have remained largely unchanged for hundreds or even thousands of years. Quinoa was known to the Incas as "the mother of all grains" and was first cultivated over 5,000 years ago.

There are hundreds of cultivated types of quinoa, but the most common versions available in stores are white, red, and black quinoa. This article will look at the nutritional content of quinoa, its health benefits, and how to add it to the diet.

Key points about quinoa

- Quinoa is thought to help prevent a number of diseases.
- It is relatively high in antioxidants, compared with other grains and cereals.
- It can be prepared in as little as 15 minutes.
- Quinoa has a naturally bitter coating called saponin that acts as an insecticide.

Nutrition

Quinoa is often considered a whole grain as the whole grain seed is eaten without any parts being removed.

Botanically, quinoa is not classified as a grain. It is a pseudo-cereal. This means it is a non-grassy plant used in much the same way as cereals and grains with a similar nutritional profile.

The seeds of pseudo-cereals can be milled and ground into flour just as other grains and cereals.

However, nutritionally, quinoa is considered a whole grain. Whole grains include the entire intact grain seed without removing any of its parts.

In contrast, when grains are milled or refined like white bread, white rice, and white pasta, they have been processed to create a finer, lighter texture. This process removes most of the fiber and important nutrients.

Whole grains, such as quinoa, provide essential vitamins, minerals, and fiber. These help regulate the digestive system and keep you fuller and more satisfied. In contrast, pasta, white rice, and white bread provide simple carbohydrates that are quickly digested but little else in the way of nutritional value.

Quinoa is naturally gluten-free. Quinoa has a high protein-to-carbohydrate ratio when compared with other grain products. It was proposed by NASA to be an ideal food for long duration space flights.

Quinoa in the diet

Quinoa is a versatile ingredient and can be used in various healthy recipes.

Quinoa has a naturally bitter coating called saponin that keeps insects away without having to use pesticides. The saponin is easily removed by rinsing quinoa with water before consuming.

Although most packaged quinoas have the saponin already removed, it is never a bad idea to give it an extra rinse.

It is easy to incorporate quinoa into your diet - just use it in place of rice in any recipe. Its small grains cook to tender in as little as 15 minutes.

Quinoa has a subtle nutty taste that makes it a versatile ingredient in the kitchen. It can be used in baking or as a breakfast grain; it also works well in hot side dishes, cold salads, and even in burgers.

Recipes:

1. Instant Quinoa Dosa With Lentils

Instant quinoa dosa with lentils is a healthy and crispy dosa. These dosas are easy to make immediately after grinding the batter without fermenting.

Course: Breakfast

Cuisine Indian

Servings: 6

Author: Antonet Roajer

Ingredients:

1 cup QUINOA UNCKD 0.50 cup URAD DAL

0.50 cup MOONG DAL RAW

0.50 cup TOOR DAL 1 tsp SALT

- Rinse quinoa several times with water until the water runs clear to take off the natural bitter coating called saponin from quinoa. If you are not rinsing the quinoa thoroughly then the dosa will taste bitter.

- Wash moong dal, toor dal and urad dal together. Soak quinoa, moong dal, urad dal and toor dal together in water for 5 - 6 hours.?
- After 5 hours, drain the water from soaked quinoa and lentils. In a blender or grinder add the quinoa and lentils together, add water little by little and grind it to a smooth batter. Add salt and mix well.?
- In a hot wide non-stick skillet or pan pour a ladle of batter and spread it in a circular motion. Drizzle oil on sides of a dosa and cook until the bottom side of a dosa becomes crispy. Transfer it to a plate and serve. Repeat the same with a rest of the batter.

2. Quinoa Fried Rice - A Healthy Dinner In 30 Minutes

Quinoa fried rice is a quick and healthy dinner with eggs and mixed vegetables. Quinoa fried rice is an easy and simple recipe for dinner in 30 minutes.

Course: Dinner

Cuisine: Indian

Servings: 2

Ingredients: 0.50 cup QUINOA
1 cup WATER
0.50 tsp SALT TABLE
0.50 cup CARROTS RAW 0.50 cup PEAS GREEN RAW 0.50 cup GREEN BEANS
2 no EGG WHL RAW FRSH 1 tbsp SOY SAUCE
0.25 tsp PEPPER BLACK 0.50 tsp GARLIC RAW
1 tbsp OIL

Instructions:

- Rinse quinoa in water several times to take away the bitter coating (saponin) from quinoa. Use a fine mesh strainer to keep quinoa from falling out while rinsing. If you are not rinsing the quinoa thoroughly then the fried rice will end up in a bitter taste.?
 - In a small pan add a cup of water with a pinch of salt and bring it to a boil. Add quinoa to the boiling water, cover and cook until the quinoa gets cooked and the water gets absorbed by the quinoa completely. Spread quinoa on a wide plate and allow it to cool.?
 - In a separate pan heat a tbsp of oil, add chopped garlic and cook until the garlic color changes into golden brown.?
 - Add chopped carrot, green beans, green peas and cook until the veggies get cooked (the veggies should be little crunchy).?
 - Push the veggies to the one side of a pan and make a space for cooking the eggs.?
- Add eggs, salt, pepper powder and make the scrambled eggs. Now mix the scrambled eggs with cooked vegetables in the corner of a pan, add cooked quinoa, soy sauce and mix well. Check for the taste and season the quinoa fried rice with salt and pepper and serve warm.

3. Quinoa Vegetable Soup Recipe

Quinoa vegetable soup is a healthy and filling dish in 20 minutes. It is an easy and low-calorie vegetable soup. Also, an excellent replacement for a meal.

Course: Soup

Cuisine: Indian

Ingredients: 0.25 cup QUINOA UNCOOKED
4 cup WATER
0.50 cup ONIONS CHOPPED
0.25 cup CARROTS CHOPPED
0.25 cup GREEN BEANS CHOPPED 0.50 cup GREEN PEAS
0.25 cup BROCCOLI RAW

0.50 tsp SALT TABLE
0.50 tsp PEPPER BLACK

Instructions

- Rinse quinoa in water thoroughly. Chop the onion, carrot, green beans and broccoli?
- In a sauce pan add chopped vegetables, quinoa, water, peas and cook until the water comes to a boil. ?
- When the water starts boiling, cover the pan with a lid and cook for 15 minutes in a medium flame until the quinoa gets cooked. Reduce the flame and cook until it reaches the desired soup consistency. Add salt and black pepper to a taste and serve.???

4. Quinoa Moong Dal Khichdi With Vegetabl

Quinoa moong dal khichdi is a healthy and low-carb dinner with quinoa, moong dal, and vegetables. Quinoa and moong dal together make a filling and tasty dinner.

Course: Dinner

Cuisine: Indian

Ingredients: 0.25 cup QUINOA UNCKD
2 cup WATER
0.50 tsp SALT TABLE
0.50 cup PEAS GREEN RAW
1 no ROMA TOMATO 0.50 cup ONIONS RAW
1 no CINNAMON STICK SMALL
2 no CLOVES
1 no BAY LEAF
1 tsp CUMIN SEED
0.50 tsp CORIANDER POWDER 1 tsp RED CHILI POWDER
1 tbsp OIL
0.25 cup MOONG DAL RAW

Instructions

- Rinse quinoa separately several times until the water runs clear. Rinse moong dal separately 2 - 3 times.?
- Soak quinoa and moong dal together for 20 mins.?
- In a pressure cooker, add quinoa, moong dal, water, and salt. Cover and cook until 3 whistles. Turn off the heat and allow the pressure cooker to cool naturally.?
- In a saucepan, heat oil, add cumin seeds, cinnamon stick, cloves, bay leaf and saute until nice aroma comes out.?
- Add chopped onion and saute until the onion becomes soft.?
- Add turmeric powder and cook until the turmeric powder loses its raw smell.?
- Add chopped tomato, salt and cook until the tomato becomes soft and mushy.?
- Add coriander powder, red chili powder and mix well. Sprinkle little amount of water and cook until the spices lose its raw smell.?
- Add green peas and mix well. Add the cooked quinoa and moong dal mixture and mix well. Garnish with chopped coriander leaves.

5. Quinoa Muffins - Banana Quinoa Muffins

Quinoa muffins are a healthy muffin with wheat flour, walnuts, oats, and raisins. Banana quinoa muffins are an excellent way to include quinoa in kids diet.

Course: Bakes

Cuisine: American

Ingredients: 3 no BANANA

0.50 cup QUINOA
1 cup WHEAT FLOUR
1 cup SUGARS BROWN
0.50 cup SUGARS GRANULATED
1 tsp BAKING SODA
1 tsp BAKING POWDER 0.25 cup OIL
2 no EGGS
0.50 cup WALNUTS
0.50 cup RAISINS SEEDLESS 0.50 cup OATS

Instructions

- Rinse quinoa in water several times to take away the bitter coating (saponin) from quinoa. Use a fine mesh strainer to keep quinoa from falling out while rinsing. Also, rub quinoa with your hand while rinsing.?
 - In a pan add 1/2 cup of quinoa, 1 cup of water and bring it to a boil. When it starts boiling, cover the pan with a lid and cook until the quinoa gets cooked and the water content absorbed by the quinoa completely.?
 - Pre-heat the oven to 375 degrees and grease each muffin cup with oil or butter. Powder the oats using a blender.?
 - In a bowl add whole wheat flour, baking soda, baking powder, powdered oats and mix well.?
 - Mash the bananas using a fork until smooth. Add eggs, brown sugar, granulated sugar, olive oil and stir until combined.?
 - Combine both the flour mixture and banana mixture together. Add cooked quinoa, chopped walnuts, raisins and stir together.?
 - Pour into each muffin cup and bake for 20 - 25 minutes or until the toothpick inserted in the center of a muffin and comes out clean.?
 - Allow the muffins to cool for 5 minutes in the muffin pan itself and run a sharp knife around the edges and take out the muffins gently.?
- Transfer it to a wire rack and cool completely. Serve or store the muffins in a refrigerator for next day use. These muffins stay good in the freezer for up to a month.

Millets

Millets - An Introduction

Millets are tiny in size and round in shape and can be white, grey, yellow or red. Millets are major food sources for all climatic regions of the world, and feature in the traditional cuisine of many others. Millets are one of the ancient foods known to humans and possibly the first cereal grain to be used for domestic purposes. Millets provide good amounts of iron, calcium, potassium, and the B vitamins.

Millets can be cultivated without using groundwater or any irrigated water. Their energy requirement from sources such as chemical fertilizers, pesticides, water and power can be near zero. Millets are the only solutions to all kinds of crisis, including that of water, nutrition and climate change.

By any nutritional parameter, millets are miles ahead of rice and wheat in terms of their mineral content. Each one of the millets has more fiber than other cereals and grains which are commonly used by us. It is scientifically proven that Finger millet has thirty times more Calcium than rice while every other millet has at least twice the amount of Calcium compared to rice. In their Iron content, foxtail and

little millet are so rich that rice is nowhere in the race. While most of us seek a micro nutrient such as Beta Carotene in pharmaceutical pills and capsules, millets offer it in abundant quantities. The much privileged rice, ironically, has zero quantity of this precious micro nutrient. In this fashion, nutrient to nutrient, every single millet is extraordinarily superior to rice and wheat and therefore is the solution for the malnutrition that affects a vast majority of the Indian population.

Millets can be consumed daily and can also be used mixing with wheat and rice based products. Kids should be given millets in the form of regular foods or in terms of snacks. With millets we can do all varieties of food starting from idly, Dosa, Kichadi, main meals, South Indian traditional snacks such as Muruku, Adirasam and also tasty Ladoos. Millet food is highly useful in building dietary fibers which are used for building immunity. There is a misconception that millets are hard to digest. It is a slow digestive product but provides high energy for working. That is why millets are excellent for diabetics.

These are the traditional grains which are now less used in our daily diet. This is mainly because of not knowing the prominence and nutritional values of these grains. Millets are highly nutritious, healthy and versatile. Millets are NUTRICEREALS.

Around 1960-1970 millets were considered as food for poor. So it slowly got vanished from our healthy meals and we started to eat low nutritional polished, junk and attractive foods. Now it made most of us unfamiliar with these grains to the extent that many of us have not even heard some of these name like Kodo Millet, Little Millet, Foxtail Millet, Barnyard Millet and also Proso Millet.

WHY EAT MILLETS ?

Millets are the best food grain collection, which are highly rich in protein, fiber, minerals and other forms of vitamins and minerals. The usage of millets regularly can help us grow healthy avoiding all the health problems caused due to lack of vital proteins, vitamins, nutrients, fiber and other important food components. Millet has been a major source of protein and energy for millions of people in Asia, Africa and India for thousands of years. It's gluten-free, has a mild flavor and adds healthy proteins and fiber to recipes.

As Millets are highly nutritious, non-glutinous and non-acid forming foods. Hence they are soothing and easy to digest. They are considered to be the least allergenic and most digestible grains available. Compared to Paddy rice, especially polished Paddy rice, Millets release lesser percentage of glucose and over a longer period of time. This lowers the risk of diabetes. Millets are particularly high in minerals like iron, magnesium, phosphorous and potassium. Finger millet (Finger Millet) is the richest in calcium content, about many times that of Paddy rice or wheat.

HEALTH BENEFITS OF MILLETS Lowers the risk of diabetes

Millets helps to lower blood glucose levels and improves insulin response. Besides, the magnesium present in millets is a co-factor for more than 300 enzymes, including enzymes involved in the body's use of glucose and insulin secretion and metabolism of glucose in the body. Whole grains improve insulin sensitivity by lowering glycemic index of the diet by increasing content of fiber, magnesium and vitamin-E. Glycemic Index is a scale that ranks carbohydrates by how much they raise the blood glucose levels compared to a reference food. Glycemic Index is based on the quality and not the quantity of carbohydrates. Millets have a low Glycemic Index compared to most other cereals. Since millets have a low Glycemic Index they increase satiety by decreasing hunger because it slows the rate of digestion. Type of starch (amylose/amylopectin) also influences the Glycemic Index. Millets have a high amylose content which is why they are slow absorbing and sustainably release sugar to our blood and enable to work for long durations.

Heart-Protective Properties

Although oats have been widely publicized for their heart-protective properties, millet is a grain that should also be included on your list of heart-healthy choices because of its status as a good source of magnesium. Magnesium has been shown in studies to reduce the severity of asthma and to reduce the

frequency of migraine attacks. Magnesium has also been shown to lower high blood pressure and reduce the risk of heart attack, especially in people with athero-sclerosis or diabetic heart disease. Niacin (Vitamin B3) can be of help in lowering high cholesterol. A cup of cooked millet provides 19% of the daily value for magnesium.

Protective against Breast Cancer

Lignans are an essential phytonutrient present in millets that are very useful to humans. In the intestines of humans, the bacteria act on them and convert them to mammalian lignans that are known to cut the risk of cancers like breast cancer.

Development and Repair of Body Tissue

The phosphorus provided by millet plays a role in the structure of every cell in the body. In addition to its role in forming the mineral matrix of bone, phosphorus is an essential component of numerous other life-critical compounds including adenosine triphosphate or ATP, the molecule that is the energy currency of the body. Phosphorus is an important component of nucleic acids, the building blocks of the genetic code. In addition, the metabolism of lipids (fats) relies on phosphorus, and phosphorus is an essential component of lipid -containing structures such as cell membranes and nervous system structures. A cup of cooked millet will give you 17% of the daily value for phosphorus.

Millets are a rich source of phosphorus which is an important mineral for energy production and is an essential component of ATP the energy store of the body. It also forms an essential part of nervous system and cell membranes.. Millet is such a grain that should be included in the list of heart-healthy choices because of its status as a good source of magnesium. Magnesium increases insulin sensitivity and lowers triglycerides. It also acts as a co-factor for more than 300 enzymes. Lignans present in millets are converted to mammalian lignans and entero-lactone by the healthy gut micro floral in our body which is thought to protect against breast cancer as well as heart diseases.