

Benefits Chia Seed



Also known as- *Salvia hispanica*, California Chia, California Sage, Chia Pet Seed, and Chia Sage.

When we think of Chia seeds, invariably an image comes to mind of the Chia Pet - a clay figurine with Chia sprouts for hair. However, most of us do not realize that Chia seed is highly nutritious, medicinal, and it has been used for centuries for its beneficial properties. Chia was a staple for Incan, Mayan, and Aztec cultures. "Chia" is even the Mayan word for "strength", and Chia seeds used to be referred to as "Indian Running Food" because they are so energizing. Apache and Aztec warriors sustained themselves by bringing the seeds along while on conquests, Aztecs used Chia as a legal tender, Indians of the southwest depended upon them during long trading expeditions, and they were also used by the Indians and missionaries as a poultice for gunshot wounds and other injuries. Today, Chia seed is being rediscovered and embraced as a "superfood", and it is quickly becoming popular among nutritionists and herbalists alike.

- Chia is an excellent source of calcium, magnesium, iron, zinc, boron, niacin.
- Contains all essential amino acids
- Vitamins B, D & E.
- 20% protein by weight
- More digestible protein than beans, soy or peas.
- 8.7 times the omega-3 in wild atlantic salmon.
- 5.4 times the calcium in 2% milk.
- 2.7 times more iron than raw spinach.
- More antioxidants than blueberries.
- Mucin - reduces inflammation in digestive tract.

Chia seed contains large amounts of B vitamins and calcium. In roughly two ounces of chia (100 grams), there are 600 milligrams of calcium, contrasted with 120 milligrams of calcium in the same amount of milk. That's five times as much calcium than milk!

Chia also contains boron, which is needed for bones. With much of the nation's soil boron depleted, we simply are not getting enough boron in our daily diets. Boron is needed to aid the metabolism of calcium, magnesium, manganese, and phosphorus in bones and for muscle growth. Boron also can increase the levels of natural estrogen.

Benefits of Chia Seeds

Omega-3 Acids

Chia seed has higher levels of alpha-linolenic acid (ALA) than flax seed. ALA is an essential acid because it is not produced by the body. In fact, chia seeds have the highest known whole-food source levels of Omega-3 acids, as measured by percent of weight. These oils, unsaturated fatty acids, are the essential oils your body needs to help emulsify and absorb the fat soluble vitamins, A, D, E, & K. When there are rich amounts of linoleic acid sufficiently supplied to the body through diet, linoleic and arachidonic acids can be synthesized from linoleic acid.

Unsaturated fatty acids are essential for normal glandular activity, especially of the adrenal glands and the thyroid gland. They nourish the skin cells and are essential for healthy mucus membranes and nerves. The unsaturated fatty acids function in the body by cooperating with vitamin D in making calcium available to the tissues, assisting in the assimilation of phosphorus, and stimulating the conversion of carotene into vitamin A. Fatty acids are related to normal functioning of the reproductive system. Chia seeds contain beneficial long-chain triglycerides (LCT) in the right proportion to reduce cholesterol on arterial walls.

Antioxidants

Chia is a great natural source of antioxidants, including chlorogenic acid, caffeic acid, myricetin, quercetin and flavonols.

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Low In Sodium and Cholesterol-Free

Chia contains less than half the sodium of flax seed, per serving. This is important to those with high blood pressure and concerned about sodium intake. As a plant-based source of Omega-3, Chia is cholesterol-free.

Promotes Hydration

One of the exceptional qualities of the Chia seed is its hydrophilic properties, having the ability to absorb more than 12 times its weight in water. Its ability to hold on to water offers prolonged hydration. Fluids and electrolytes provide the environment that supports the life of all the body's cells. Their concentration and composition are regulated to remain as constant as possible. When you eat chia seeds there is a greater efficiency in the utilization of body fluids, and the electrolyte balance is maintained.

Helps in Weight Loss

Chia is very filling. As more Chia is eaten, there's less room for fattening foods.

Stabilizes Blood Sugar

Chia Seed reduces blood glucose swings and supports conditions of hypoglycemia and diabetes. Chia's soluble fiber exerts a stabilizing influence on blood glucose levels by regulating the rate at which complex carbohydrates are digested and assimilated in the body. This creates steady, stable blood glucose levels...which also means steady, high energy levels.

Builds Endurance

The Mayan word for Chia is "strength." Chia builds stamina and endurance because it steadily releases slow-burning glucose into the bloodstream.

Energy

Chia has a high energy to weight ratio, (more than wheat, corn, rice or oats) that makes it a favorite choice of long distance runners and other athletics.

Source of Fiber

Chia seed produces a thick mucilage in water, absorbing up to 30 times its weight in water. This soluble fiber cleans the intestines by binding and transporting debris from the intestinal walls so that it can be eliminated efficiently and regularly. A daily dose of chia seed provides an excellent fiber source and most people notice a difference in less than a week.

Efficient Assimilation

As a source of protein, Chia seed is digested and absorbed very easily. This results in rapid transport to the tissues and utilization by the cells. This efficient assimilation makes the Chia very effective during periods of rapid growth, as in children and adolescents. Chia is also helpful for the growth and regeneration of tissue during pregnancy and lactation, and for regeneration of muscle tissue for athletes, weight lifters, etc.

Gluten-Free

Unlike typical grain-source proteins, chia protein contains no gluten. Chia is an ideal food for individuals having gluten sensitivity, carbohydrate intolerance, hypoglycemia, Celiac Disease, Crohn's Disease, or for anyone wishing to avoid common gluten-containing grains like corn, barley, and wheat.

Stays Fresh

Chia contains the usual Vitamin C, ferulates, and Vitamin E. The real secret is the Cinnamic acids that guard the omega-3 oils from oxidation. This is why chia is a stable product for years! Unlike flax seed, chia seed can be stored at room temperature for 4-5 years.

Superfood for People with Food Allergies

Chia seed is great superfood for all people, including individuals exhibiting food allergies, food sensitivities, or food and chemical hypersensitivity. One study found no evidence of allergic response to chia, even among individuals having peanut and tree nut allergies.

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Summary

Touted as being the new "superfood", Chia seeds are high in easily digestible protein, essential fatty acids, vitamins, soluble fiber, antioxidants, minerals, and are a digestive, disinfectant, febrifuge and ophthalmic. They are currently being used for their nutritional and medicinal properties, endurance for athletes, for suppressing the appetite, weight loss, leveling blood sugar, and for aiding intestinal regularity. Chia seeds readily dissolve into the water, creating a substance that looks like gelatin. This gel-forming action is due to the soluble fiber in the Chia seed. Researchers believe that this same gel-forming phenomenon takes place in the stomach when Chia seed is consumed, thus creating a physical barrier between carbohydrates and digestive enzymes and slowing the conversion of carbohydrates into sugar. Slowing the conversion of carbohydrates into sugar helps with endurance and metabolic rates, which is beneficial for athletes and others. For weight loss, Chia seeds are an appetite suppressant, and Chia gel may be used to replace food within recipes. Bulking up a meal with Chia gel helps lessen the amount of food consumed, since Chia gel is primarily made up of water. Chia gel may also be used in place of fats

within recipes, even within baked goods. Chia seed has hydrophilic properties, and can absorb more than 12 times its weight in water. Because of this, Chia seeds can prolong hydration, helping retain moisture and regulate more efficiently the body's absorption of nutrients and body fluids, including electrolyte balance.