

FLAX SEED - A SUPER FOOD

Flax seeds, also known as linseeds, are small, tan or golden colored, drop shaped seeds, mostly planted in the cooler regions of the world. Flax seeds and their oil have been used for more than 6,000 years due to their numerous nutritional benefits.

NUTRITIONAL COMPOSITION OF FLAX SEEDS

Flax seeds are known to be a super food, due to their unique nutritional properties. They are a rich source of alpha linoleic acid, lignans, dietary fiber, vitamin E and different minerals.

1 table spoon of flax seeds provides 55 kcals, 1.8 grams of protein, 2.9 grams of dietary fiber and about 4.0 grams of fat, most of which are in the form of polyunsaturated fatty acids (essential fatty acids that are not produced by the body).

HEALTH BENEFITS OF FLAX SEEDS:

• Source of Omega 3 Fatty Acids

Flax seeds contain rich quantities of alpha linoleic acid (ALA), a type of omega three fatty acid. ALA is said to be useful in the prevention of coronary heart disease, reduction in inflammations and improvement in arrhythmia. It is also an excellent replacement of essential fatty acids normally found in fish.

• Antioxidant Properties

Flax seeds are packed with antioxidants, especially in the form of lignans. These antioxidant properties enable them to strengthen immunity, prevent early skin aging and pigmentation.

• Heart Healthy

The nutrient components of flax seeds can provide health benefits to patients with cardiovascular diseases. Research done to evaluate heart healthy effects of flax seeds revealed anti-hypertensive benefits, as well as moderate reduction in bad cholesterol levels.

• Better Digestive Health

Flax seeds have a high content of soluble and insoluble fibers which helps in maintaining regular bowel movements, thereby preventing constipation or any build up in the body. The magnesium present in flax seeds helps in relaxation of the digestive tract muscles and in maintaining a healthy gut.

HEALTH BENEFITS OF FLAX SEEDS (contd.):

• Regulation of Hormonal Imbalance

The lignans found in flax seeds being phytoestrogens, help regulate hormonal imbalance. Research also suggests, that intake of phytoestrogen may help in prevention of ovarian cancer.

HOW TO USE FLAXSEEDS IN DIET:

Flax seeds can be used in a variety of ways in different recipes. A few tips to use them in daily diet include the following:

- Grounded flax seeds can be used in beverages like milk, shakes and smoothies or as an ingredient in cakes, breads and muffins.
- Whole flax seeds or flaxseed oil can used as filling in salads and sandwiches.
- Flax seeds (due to its gelatinous properties) can be used as a substitute for eggs in recipes by mixing it with water.



References:

- www.ndb.nal.usda.gov
- www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/15945135
- www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/14995053
- www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/21616170
- www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/23211303/
- www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC2989356/
- www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4375225/
- www.aicr.org/foods-that-fight-cancer/flaxseed.html
- www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/12771342?dopt=Abstract
- www.hyper.ahajournals.org/content/62/6/1081.long#abstract-1
- <https://oksmoothie.com/food/flax-seeds/>