



Benefit Pumpkins - Top 7 Useful properties and interesting facts

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Abstract. The article discusses the main properties of pumpkin and its impact on the human body. A systematic review of modern specialized literature and relevant scientific data was carried out. The chemical composition and nutritional value of the product are indicated, the use of pumpkin is considered in various types of medicine and the effectiveness of its use in various diseases. Potentially adverse effects of pumpkin were analyzed separately on the human body under certain medical conditions and diseases.

Key words: pumpkin , benefit, harm, beneficial properties, contraindications

Golden gourd is considered a vegetable due to its high nutritional value, but scientifically it is classified as a fruit. Its pulp and seeds provide a powerful array of antioxidants, nutrients, and support digestion—their role in promoting optimal well-being is hard to dispute. For those of you who haven't yet added fleshy fruits to your diet, we've rounded up the latest health benefits backed by scientific research.

The calorie content of pumpkin is 26 kcal per 100 g. Such a low calorie content is due to the fact that it is 94% water. The pulp is also high in fiber and has an impressive nutrient profile. Most of all, it contains beta-carotene, which the body converts into vitamin A - a cup of boiled product contains 245% of the daily value. The same portion contains 10-19% of the daily value of vitamin C, potassium, copper, manganese, vitamin B12.

Top 7 Benefits of Pumpkin and Interesting Facts

1. Protects eyesight

Bright fruits are a good source of β -carotene, lutein and zeaxanthin . Powerful antioxidants protect against progressive macular degeneration, a major cause of blindness among the elderly. Vitamin C and E in the pulp also protect against degenerative eye damage with age. This is confirmed by the

study of age-related eye diseases conducted in 2019. These substances are better absorbed when they are eaten with a small amount of healthy fats, such as olive oil. ^[one]

2. Improves heart function

High blood pressure provokes cardiovascular disease. Both the rejection of salt and sufficient potassium intake help to reduce it. This theory was tested by scientists in 2017 with the support of 2722 volunteers. The fiber and vitamin C contained in the pulp, as well as the components of pumpkin seed oil, improve the functioning of the heart muscle, reduce diastolic blood pressure and increase good cholesterol. ^[2]

3. Reduces the risk of cancer

A diet rich in beta-carotene suppresses and slows down the growth of cancer cells in throat, pancreatic, prostate, and colon cancers. Carotenoids neutralize the free radicals that cancer cells produce to multiply quickly. Research has shown that only pumpkin and other vitamin A-rich foods are beneficial—supplements do not provide the same level of protection. ^[3, 4, 5]

4. Prevention of diabetes and obesity

Pumpkin polysaccharides have incredible potential in fighting insulin resistance and helping control blood sugar levels. They may protect against the development of type 2 diabetes and become the basis of anti-diabetic drugs in the future. As for weight loss, pumpkin does not have superpowers and does not help burn fat, but it allows you to eat less due to its low calorie content and high fiber content - it saturates faster, gives a feeling of satiety for a long time.

5. Helps with an overactive bladder

Pumpkin seeds strengthen the pelvic floor muscles and maintain bladder control through two processes - inhibit 2 enzymes, increase testosterone. At the same time, the seeds relieve bladder hypertonicity by increasing the ability to retain urine and reducing the frequency of urination. Pumpkin seed oil is no less useful for various urinary disorders. ^[6]

6. Improves skin condition and protects it from UV rays

Carotenoids, lutein, zeaxanthin, vitamin E and many other antioxidants increase the protection of skin cells from harmful UV rays. Ascorbic acid, in addition, promotes the production of collagen, a protein that keeps the skin beautiful and healthy. ^[7]

7. Increases immunity

The composition includes many substances that strengthen the immune system. A complex of vitamins, iron, folic acid and other compounds speed up wound healing, increase the production of white blood cells and help immune cells work more efficiently. ^[8, 9]

Who should not eat pumpkin: contraindications and harm

The fetus cannot harm a healthy person. Due to too frequent use, swelling and problems with the stool can only appear, which applies to all vegetables. Individual intolerance manifests itself in a tiny percentage of people. In extreme cases, allergies, nausea, itching, diarrhea appear - history knows no more serious precedents. Scientists also found that cucumbers and watermelons contain similar allergens, and if you are allergic to them, you should be careful with pumpkin dishes.

How many pumpkins can you eat every day?

There is no need to eat the product daily and in large quantities - an excessive passion for vitamin A leads to hypervitaminosis, jaundice (yellowing of the eyes and skin). It is worth considering that overdose can be a serious problem for babies and children. There are also unhealthy pumpkin products with added sugar, such as lattes, candies, pie fillings. It is better to refuse them completely.

How to choose a pumpkin and cook it correctly?

There are many ways to regularly enjoy the fruit with health benefits - only the fibrous part that holds the seeds is inedible. When buying, it is better to choose small oblong-shaped fruits with no signs of decay. The smaller their size, the sweeter and less fibrous they are - giants weighing more than 10 kg are grown as feed varieties for animals. Among culinary specialists, the Muscat-type butternut variety is especially famous, known for its nutty flavor and delicious aroma.

You can eat pumpkin raw, but most people find its taste and smell disgusting - the finished product brings the greatest health benefits and pleasure. The fruit is often found in recipes for soups and stews, it is boiled, steamed, baked on parchment with butter. Ready-made pumpkin puree is added to breakfasts, dinners, light snacks - oatmeal, pancakes, energy bars, muffins. This versatile ingredient is also used as a base for pizza or pasta, mixed with chili peppers.

Expert comment

Tatyana Eliseeva, nutritionist, nutritionist

Ribbed bright fruits are needed not only for carving lanterns for Halloween. I recommend using them in sweet and savory recipes to support weight, immunity, eyesight and enjoy the benefits of natural foods.

If you have any favorite pumpkin recipes, be sure to share them in the comments and share your cooking secrets!

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