Pumpkin Seed Nutrition

Pumpkin seeds have a long history of nutritional use dating back to the Oaxaca Highlands of Mexico over 7,500 years ago. Across many cultures, they've been used as a **folk remedy** to treat:

- **Urinary tract** and **bladder infections**
- **High blood pressure** and **blood sugar**
- **Kidney stones**
- **Parasites** like worms

Modern science confirms that pumpkin seeds have an impressive nutrient profile that benefits many aspects of your health. They're a rich source of **protein**, **unsaturated fatty acids**, vitamins, and minerals that reduce risk factors of **chronic diseases**, including **cancer**.

You can buy pumpkin seeds raw, spouted, or roasted at most grocery stores and specialty health food retailers. When sold in their green shells, they're also sometimes called pepitas.

Health Benefits

Pumpkin seeds are a potent source of many nutrients, offering high levels of essential vitamins and minerals in a small serving. But they also are high in **calories**, so limit your portions to help manage a healthy weight.

Add a handful to your meal for potential health benefits like:

Anti-Inflammatory Effects

Pumpkin seeds are rich in many **antioxidants**, which protect our cells from **disease-causing damage** and reduce **inflammation** in our bodies. They're also a great source of **dietary fiber**, which can enhance this effect. Studies show that pumpkin seeds' anti-inflammatory abilities can help maintain good function in the **liver**, **bladder**, **bowel**, and **joints**.

Lower Risk of Diabetes

Pumpkin seeds are high in **magnesium**, which most people don't get enough of in their diet. Magnesium content helps regulate **blood sugar levels**, lowering your **diabetes risk**. Studies show pumpkin seeds also help people with diabetes maintain blood sugar control to **manage the disease**.

Anti-Cancer Properties

Laboratory studies show pumpkin seeds can stop the growth of **breast** and **prostate cancer** cells. They also induce **apoptosis** or cancer cell death. These effects are largely attributed

to pumpkin seeds' high antioxidant activity, but much more research is needed to study a broader range of cancers.

Healthy Heart Function

The high magnesium content in pumpkin seeds helps lower and regulate **blood pressure**. Thanks to this effect, diets high in magnesium are associated with a lower risk of **stroke** and death from **heart disease**.

Studies show that the antioxidants in pumpkin seeds also increase **nitric oxide** levels in your body. This molecule works to keep your blood vessels smooth, flexible, and healthy, **improving blood flow** and reducing the risk of heart and **circulation** problems.

Better Sleep

Snacking on pumpkin seeds before bed may help you get a better night's rest. Pumpkin seeds are a natural source of **tryptophan**, an amino acid that promotes sleep. The **zinc**, **copper**, and **selenium** in pumpkin seeds can also affect sleep duration and quality. Finally, studies show that magnesium can help reduce stress and anxiety, contributors to **insomnia**.

Nutrition

Pumpkin seeds are rich in vitamins and minerals like **manganese** and **vitamin K**, both of which are important in helping wounds heal. They also contain **zinc**, a mineral that helps the immune system fight bacteria and viruses.

Pumpkin seeds are also an excellent source of:

- **Phosphorus**
- **Magnesium**
- **Iron**
- **Potassium**
- **Copper**

Nutrients per Serving

A quarter-cup serving of dried pumpkin seed kernels contains:

- Calories: 180
- **Protein**: 10 grams
- **Fat**: 16 grams
- **Carbohydrates**: 3 grams
- **Fiber**: 2 grams
- Sugar: 0 grams

Portion Sizes

Because pumpkin seeds are high in calories, **limit your portions** to the recommended serving size of about one-quarter cup. The seeds' high fiber content can help regulate your blood sugar and make you feel fuller, however, lowering the urge to overeat.