

Uses of Ancient Seeds

Sunflower Seed Attributes:

You think sunflower seeds are only to eat as a snack or sprinkle on salads? Think again! Remember the Native Americans used sunflower seeds as one of their staples? Here are some of the reasons why:



Sunflower Seed Health Benefits

1.) Cardiovascular Benefits - Sunflowers are an exceptional source of vitamin E. Vitamin E is an antioxidant that helps keep free radicals from oxidizing cholesterol and plays a very important role in the prevention of cardiovascular disease. You can get over ninety percent of the daily value for vitamin E in only a quarter of a cup of sunflower seeds.

2.) Anti-Inflammatory – By protecting fat-containing structures and molecules, such as cell membranes, brain cells, and cholesterol, vitamin E has significant anti-inflammatory effects that result in the reduction of symptoms in asthma, osteoarthritis, and rheumatoid arthritis.

3.) Cancer Prevention - Sunflower seeds are a good source of selenium. Studies suggest a strong correlation between low selenium intake and cancer incidence. Selenium has been shown to induce DNA repair and synthesis in damaged cells and inhibit the proliferation of cancer cells. In addition, selenium is incorporated at the active site of many proteins, including glutathione peroxidase, which is used by the liver to detoxify many harmful molecules and is particularly important for protection against cancer. One quarter of a cup provides over thirty percent of the daily value for selenium. The vitamin E so abundant in sunflower seeds has also been shown to reduce the risk of colon cancer, bladder cancer, and prostate cancer.

4.) Bone Health - Sunflower seeds are particularly rich in magnesium. It's a well-known fact that calcium is necessary for strong bones, but magnesium is, too. Copper found in sunflower seeds is vital for the function of enzymes involved in cross-linking collagen and elastin, providing strength and flexibility in bones and joints.

5.) Good for the Nerves - By preventing calcium from rushing into nerve cells and activating them, magnesium keeps our nerves relaxed and thereby our blood vessels and muscles too. Insufficient magnesium leads to higher blood pressure, muscle tension, migraine headaches, soreness and fatigue. Studies have demonstrated magnesium helps diminish the frequency of migraine attacks, lowers blood pressure and helps prevent heart attacks. Sunflower seeds also contain tryptophan, an amino acid that helps produce serotonin, an important neurotransmitter that calms the brain and promotes relaxation.

6.) Skin Protection - Vitamin E has sometimes been described as the "lightning rod" of the cell, allowing reactive molecules to strike the cell without causing damage. This function of vitamin E is particularly apparent in the case of the skin, since vitamin E directly protects the skin from ultraviolet radiation. In many studies, vitamin E applied topically has been shown to prevent UV damage. A diet containing vitamin E-rich foods promotes this same protective effect.

Sunflower Seed, uncooked

Nutrition Facts

Serving Size: 1 cup, with hulls, edible yield (46g)

Amount Per Serving

Calories 269	Calories from Fat 213
% Daily Value *	
Total Fat 23.7g	36%
Saturated Fat 2g	10%
Polyunsaturated Fat 10.6g	
Monounsaturated Fat 8.5g	
Cholesterol 0mg	0%
Sodium 4mg	0%
Potassium 296.7mg	8%
Carbohydrates 9.2g	3%
Dietary Fiber 4g	16%
Sugars 1.2g	
Protein 9.6g	
Vitamin A 0%	Vitamin C 1%
Calcium 4%	Iron 13%

*Percent Daily Values are based on a 2,000 calorie diet. Your daily values may be higher or lower depending on your calories needs.



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