

Seeds: Super foods as immunity boosters

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Introduction

Amidst the prevalent pandemic it has become a dire need to stay fit and be ready to take the bull by its horns when the time comes. They say in army that more you sweat in training the less blood you will spill in war in current situation training is how you built up strong immune response just in case you get exposed to Covid-19, the war then means the recovery phase, the stronger your immune system the lesser the chances that Covid will do any harm to your body. Let's discuss how seeds can contribute towards developing a strong immune system.

Seeds have all that is required to develop in a plant; this means that they are jam packed with vital life supporting nutrients. They are considered as **“Functional foods or Superfoods”** in today's times.

Some examples of such superfoods are- Flaxseeds, Watermelon seeds, Muskmelon seeds, Sesame seeds, Chia seeds, pumpkin seeds We have been enjoying the goodness of seeds from ages as in almost every Indian festival sweets made of seeds have always been served like *til-gud*, *ramdana-laddoo* etc. Somehow we lost touch with our traditions and seeds that have been protecting us from long were no longer a part of our diet. In this article we will discuss six super healthy seeds which are high in fibres, contain healthy monounsaturated fats, polyunsaturated fats and many important vitamins, minerals and antioxidants.



1. **Flax seeds:** Flax seeds, they are also known as linseeds are high in fiber and omega-3 fats. The best flax seeds are those which have been roasted and grounded.

One ounce (28-gram) serving of flaxseeds contains a wide mix of nutrients:

Calories: 152 K Cal

Fiber: 7.8 g

Protein: 5.2 g

Monounsaturated fat: 2.1 g

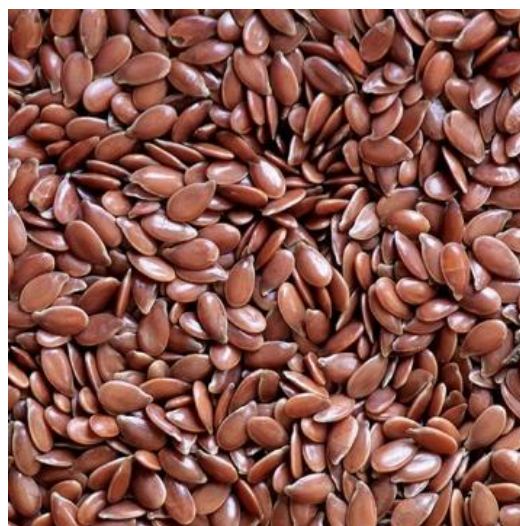
Omega-3 fats: 6.5 g

Omega-6 fats: 1.7 g

Manganese: 35% of the RDI

Thiamine (vitamin B1): 31% of the RDI

Magnesium: 28% of the RDI



Benefits:

1. Seeds can lower the risk of heart related diseases.
 2. They help in lowering the risk of diabetes
 3. They might reduce the risk of cancer.
2. **Chia Seeds:** Again a very high source of fiber, proteins, omega 3 fatty acids and several other nutrients. One ounce (28-gram) serving of chia seeds contains:

Calories: 137 K Cal

Fiber: 10.6 g

Protein: 4.4 g

Monounsaturated fat: 0.6 g

Omega-3 fats: 4.9 g

Omega-6 fats: 1.6 g

Thiamine (vitamin B1): 15% of the RDI

Magnesium: 30% of the RDI

Manganese: 30% of the RDI



Benefits:

1. Help in reducing inflammation.
2. May reduce blood sugar.
3. May aid in losing weight by reducing appetite.

4. May also reduce risk of heart diseases.
5. May help in reducing blood pressure.
3. **Sesame seeds:** Perhaps the most popular seeds in Indian cuisines. Similar to other seeds they are jam packed with protein, good quality fats, fiber and a whole lot of other vital micro nutrients. One ounce (28 g) of sesame seeds contains :

Calories: 160 K Cal

Fiber: 3.3 g

Protein: 5 g

Monounsaturated fat: 5.3 g

Omega-6 fats: 6 g

Copper: 57% of the RDI

Manganese: 34% of the RDI

Magnesium: 25% of the RDI



Benefits:

1. Sesame seeds are the best known dietary source of lignans, powerful antioxidant.
2. Sesame seeds may also help reduce inflammation and oxidative stress, which can worsen symptoms of many disorders, including arthritis.
4. **Pumpkin Seeds:** Once again a very popular kind of seeds finding its reach to almost every Indian household are pumpkin seeds , they are good source of phosphorus, monounsaturated fats and omega-6 fats. One ounce (28-gram) serving of pumpkin seeds contains:

Calories: 151 K Cal

Fiber: 1.7 g

Protein: 7 g

Monounsaturated fat: 4 g

Omega-6 fats: 6 g

Manganese: 42% of the RDI

Magnesium: 37% of the RDI

Phosphorus: 33% of the RDI



Benefits:

1. Phytosterols in pumpkin seeds help in lowering blood cholesterol.
2. Regular intake of pumpkin seeds reduces the risk of breast cancer.
3. May reduce the risk of bladder stones.
4. May help in alleviating the concerns related to prostate and urinary disorders.
5. Pumpkin seed oil may help reduce blood pressure, increase “good” HDL cholesterol and improve menopause symptoms.

Melon seeds: Be it watermelon or muskmelon seeds, they are one of the most nutrient dense varieties of seeds. They are a rich source of proteins, vitamin B-complex and K, omega 3 and omega 6 fatty acids, magnesium, zinc, copper, potassium.



Benefits:

1. Beneficial for skin and hair due to good quality fats.
2. Prevents osteoporosis.
3. Improves blood sugar levels in case of diabetics due to high fiber content.
4. Boosts energy levels.
5. **Sunflower seeds:** Sunflower seeds contain a good amount of protein, monounsaturated fats and vitamin E. One ounce (28 grams) of sunflower seeds contains:

Calories: 164

Fiber: 2.4 grams

Protein: 5.8 grams

Monounsaturated fat: 5.2 grams

Omega-6 fats: 6.4 grams

Vitamin E: 47% of the RDI

Manganese: 27% of the RDI

Magnesium: 23% of the RDI



Sunflower seeds may be associated with reduced inflammation in middle-aged and older people, which may help reduce the risk of heart disease.

Benefits:

1. Helps in reducing inflammation.
2. Helps in lowering total cholesterol and triglycerides levels.

Conclusion:

This is a proven fact now that due to extensive nutrients packaging the role of seeds in enhancing immune system is indisputable. They can be consumed with salads, shakes and so many other cuisines with their nutty and crunchy taste; you will find them not only convenient but extremely delightful. Just roast these seeds together, add some raisins and nuts along with peanuts and your 'superfood' is ready. Now, add this mixture to cornflakes, or mix with wheat flour or gram flour and make delicious laddoos with jaggery. So next time you supper, don't forget to add a handful of nature's bliss remember the only way out is to stay strong.

