



OHANA  
**CHIROPRACTIC**  
& WELLNESS CENTER

## What is Chia Seed?

Chia seed is an ancient **superfood** that is currently experiencing a glorious renaissance ;) It is a member of the sage family (*Salvia Hispanica*). The little black and white seeds were once a staple of the Incan, Mayan and Aztec cultures, along with the Native Americans of the southwest. "Chia" is actually the Mayan word for strength. The seeds were used by these ancient cultures as mega-energy food, especially for their running messengers, who would carry a small pouch of it with them. Chia has been called 'Indian Running Food' and gives an incredibly 'sustaining' surge of **energy**. Chia also happens to TASTE great, looks cute (like tiny dinosaur eggs) and is ready to eat really quickly...besides which it has an off-the-scale **nutritional profile**...

## Why would you want to eat Chia?

Chia seeds are said to have:

- \*2 times the protein of any other seed or grain,
  - \*5 times the calcium of milk, plus boron which is a trace mineral that helps transfer calcium into your bones,
  - \*2 times the amount of potassium as bananas,
  - \*3 times the reported antioxidant strength of blueberries
  - \*3 times more iron than spinach
  - \*copious amounts of omega 3 and omega 6, which are essential fatty acids...
- They are a complete source of **protein**, providing all the essential amino acids in an easily digestible form. They are also a fabulous source of **soluble fibre**. Like flax, chia is highly '**hydrophilic**' – the seeds absorb water and create a mucilaginous gel. They can hold 9-12 times their weight in water and they absorb it very rapidly – in under 10 minutes.

### **Antioxidants**

One advantage of chia is that because it has such a high antioxidant content, the seeds stay stable for much longer, whereas flax, for example, may turn rancid. Chia seeds can easily be stored dry for 4-5 years without deterioration in flavour, odour or nutritional value. You can substitute chia in any recipe that calls for flax.

### **Mild Taste**

The taste of chia is very mild and pleasant. That means you can easily combine it with other foods without changing the taste dramatically. People add chia to

their sauces, bread batters, puddings, smoothies and more. The flavour is retained, plus masses more nutrition is added ;)

### **The 'Dieter's Dream Food'**

Chia has been called a dieter's dream food because when added to foods, it bulks them up, displacing calories and fat without diluting the flavour. Thus, someone can eat a typical serving, yet only consume about half the calories they might have eaten, because the food has been bulked up with chia. PLUS, the eater gets a bellyful of nutrient-rich superfood goodness, which hydrates and sustains them – magic ;)

### **What are some other benefits of eating Chia?**

- \* Provides energy
- \* Boosts strength
- \* Bolsters endurance
- \* Levels blood sugar
- \* Induces weight loss
- \* Aids intestinal regularity

### **Sugar Absorption**

Chia slows the impact of sugars on the system, if eaten together. Chia gel creates a physical **barrier** between carbohydrates and the digestive enzymes that break them down, which slows the conversion of carbs into sugar. That means the energy from the food is released steadily, resulting in more endurance. This is clearly of great benefit to **diabetics** in particular. It also means that you can combine chia with super-sweet tastes like apple juice and not get super-spiked ;)

### **Absorb and Retain Water**

Due to the exceptional water-absorption quality of chia, it can help you prolong **hydration** and retain **electrolytes**, especially during exertion. **Easy to Digest** Whole, water-soaked chia seeds are easily digested and absorbed. Their tiny dinosaur-egg-like shells break down quickly. They feel light in the body, yet energizing. Their nutrients can be **quickly assimilated** into the body.

### **Intestinal Broom**

Chia seeds bulk up, then work like an incredible digestive broom, sweeping through your intestinal tract, helping to dislodge and **eliminate** old accumulated waste in the intestines. Many people find their stools also become **more regular** once they eat chia.

### **Inexpensive**

Chia is a very reasonably priced, concentrated food. Our 11lb bags cost \$8. 1/3 cup of dry chia seeds (2 ounces) makes about 17 ounces of chia gel. This costs about \$1. Depending on how much gel you use, those 17oz will likely last, on average, about four days. That is about **25cents a day**.

### **Versatile**

Chia can be used in so many kinds of recipes – savory, sweet – it **works with anything**. You might want to try them in salad dressings, cookie mixtures, smoothies, crackers, ice creams, juices and so on.

### **Gluten-Free**

Chia seed protein contains no gluten. This makes it ideal for anyone with a gluten sensitivity or simply wanting to find a **replacement** for gluten-containing grains like wheat, barley, rye and oats.

## **Which medical conditions can Chia help relieve or support?**

Chia is reported to be beneficial for a vast range of issues, for example:

- \*weight loss/balance
- \*thyroid conditions
- \*hypo-glycaemia
- \*diabetes
- \*IBS
- \*celiac disease
- \*acid reflux
- \*lowering cholesterol

### **Ancient Remedy**

In the traditional cultures that consumed chia, like the Aztecs, chia was also regarded as a medicine. It was used in myriad ways – from cleaning the eyes to helping heal wounds, topically, to relieving joint pain and so on. It was considered extremely valuable for healing.

### **Acid Reflux**

chia can be used to therapeutically manage acid reflux. Because of the highly absorbent properties of chia, you can swallow a Tbsp of dry seeds with just a little water and they go into your stomach and absorb the excess acid. Make sure to drink a glass of water a few minutes later, as the seeds are so hydrophilic that if they do not find enough to absorb in the stomach, they will draw from the tissues instead. By allowing the seeds to first absorb the acid, then drinking some more water, you will be able to very simply, effectively and cheaply handle her condition. :)

### **Regeneration**

Chia aids rapid development of tissue, due to its incredible nutrient profile and easy assimilation. It can be very beneficial for those healing from injuries, people like bodybuilders who are always reforming tissues and women who are pregnant or breastfeeding.

## How do you use Chia?

The most common way to eat chia is to first **soak the seeds**. They can very rapidly absorb a large amount of liquid - between 9-12 times their volume, in under 10 minutes...

### The Basic Gel

To make a basic chia gel, simply add 1/3 cup of seeds (2oz) to 2 cups of water. Stir the mixture well, to avoid clumping, then leave it in your fridge, in a sealed jar. This will yield around 17oz of chia gel. You can begin to eat the gel almost immediately if you like. Just **10 minutes** is enough time for the gel to be formed. More of the nutrients will be easily accessible after a few hours however, so many people like to make up a batch like this and leave it in the fridge. It will stay good for about **three weeks**. Then you can just reach into the fridge and take out some of the ready-made gel whenever you need it. You might add it to smoothies, mix it with salad dressings, puddings or granola, or simply take it by the spoonful.

### Beyond Water...

As mentioned above, chia will absorb anything – it doesn't have to soak in water. We like soaking it in things like **apple juice** for example. That way, the intense sweetness of the apple juice is also offset by the chia and it tastes yummy ;). We also often *blend* fruits – for example bananas and persimmons, then stir the chia into that mixture. Again, the longer the seeds are left to soak, the more their nutrients will be **readily available** to you, yet you *could* easily eat a meal like this 10 minutes or less after preparing it.

### Whole Seeds

You can also sprinkle the **dry seeds** onto salads or add them to granola mixes. You may also want to experiment with **grinding** them first in a coffee grinder, to make a 'chia flour' you can then add to smoothies, soups and so on.

### Chia Recipes

There are many great recipes you can find online on how you can use your chia seeds in ways other than shown above. Take some time to go online and find some recipes you find are healthy and beneficial to you family.

Contact us at 801-798-2781 for more information on chia seeds and other nutritional help you may need.