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The health benefits of raisins include relief from constipation, acidosis, anemia, fever, and sexual dysfunction. Raisins have also been known to help in attempts to gain weight in a healthy way, as well as its positive impact on eye health, dental care, and bone quality.

Raisins are irreplaceable as a healthy member of the dry fruits category. These golden, green or black delicacies are favorites of almost everyone, particularly children. Raisins are widely used in cultural cooking around the world (especially in desserts), and are also added to health tonics, snacks and compact, high-energy food supplements for mountaineers, backpackers, and campers.

Raisins are obtained by drying grapes, either in the sun or in driers, which turns the grapes into golden, green or black gems. In fact, when their nutritional values and health benefits are considered, “gems” is a rather accurate name for them!

Health Benefits

Constipation:

When ingested, raisins swell because the fiber present in has shrunk in a raisin’s dried form, but it will begin to swell due to the body’s natural fluids. This adds bulk to the food moving through the intestinal tract and ultimately helps provide relief from constipation. The type of fiber in raisins is considered insoluble fiber, because it takes in water and gains volume in that way. Besides reducing constipation, raisins can also help to stop loose stools, again by absorbing the liquid of loose stools and reducing the frequency and unpredictability of diarrhea.



Weight Gain:

Raisins, like all dried fruits, are very good tools for gaining weight in a healthy way, since they are full of fructose and glucose and contain a lot of potential energy. Raisins form an ideal part of a diet for athletes or body builders who need powerful boosts of energy or for those who want to put on weight without accumulating unhealthy amounts of cholesterol. Their role as a healthy addition to the diet is further boosted because of the many vitamins, amino acids and minerals in raisins, such as selenium and phosphorus, which facilitate absorption of other nutrients and proteins in the body. Raisins also stimulate the efficient absorption of other proteins, vitamins, and nutrients gained from food, which improves your overall energy and immune system strength.

Cancer Prevention:

Raisins have high levels of catechins, which are polyphenolic antioxidants in the blood. Antioxidants scavenge the free radicals that float around the body and wreak havoc on the organ systems and cells. Free radicals are one of the primary, underlying factors that lead to the spontaneous growth of cancer cells, as well as the substance that can spur on metastasis. Therefore, by including raisins in your diet and increasing the level of these powerful antioxidants in your system, you can prevent cancer from forming, or slow down its progress if you have already developed a number of forms of that deadly disease.

Hypertension:

For many years, some people have believed that raisins have the power to reduce blood pressure and protect the integrity of heart health, but it was only recently that experts began intensive studies on these claims. The findings, although still not absolutely definitive on *how* raisins reduced blood pressure, did show a positive correlation between reduced hypertension and consumption of raisins. Many of the nutrients packed into raisins are beneficial, but experts believe that it is the high level of potassium in raisins that helps with this condition. Potassium is a well-researched way to reduce the tension of blood vessels and decrease blood pressure, and the dietary fiber in raisins is also thought to affect the biochemistry of blood vessels and reduce their stiffness, which also reduces hypertension.

Diabetes:

In a number of studies, raisins have been shown to lower the postprandial insulin response, which means that after eating a meal, raisins can help the spikes or plunges in insulin levels that can be so dangerous to patients with diabetes. It modulates the sugar absorption by the body, making it more even and stable, reducing the chance of health complications or emergencies for those suffering from both major types of diabetes. Raisins also help to regulate the release of leptin and ghrelin, which are the hormones responsible for telling the body when it is hungry or full. By keeping these hormones in check, people who eat raisins can improve their chances of maintaining a healthy diet and prevent overeating, which further improves chances of living comfortably with diabetes!

Anemia:

Raisins contain a considerable amount of iron which directly helps in the treatment of anemia. It also contains many members of the vitamin-B complex that are essential for the formation of new blood. The high copper content in raisins also helps the formation of red blood cells.



Fever:

Phenolic Phytonutrients, well known for their germicidal, antibiotic and antioxidant properties, are abundantly present in raisins and can help cure fevers by fighting viral and bacterial infections.

Eye Care:

Raisins contain polyphenolic phytonutrients which have antioxidant properties. These phytonutrients are very good for ocular health, as they protect eyes from the damage caused by free radicals (oxidants), in the form of macular degeneration, age-related weakening of vision, and cataracts. In addition to their antioxidant qualities, raisins contain significant amounts of vitamin-A, A-Beta Carotene and A-Carotenoid, all of which are essential for good ocular health.

Acidosis:

Acidosis is a state of increased acidity of the blood (also known as toxicity of the blood) or of the gases in our respiratory system. The source of acids for both conditions is the stomach. This increased acidity can be very harmful for the body as it may lead to a number of health problems such as boils, skin disease, damage to the internal organs, arthritis, gout, renal calculi, hair loss, heart diseases, tumors and even cancer. Raisins are good source of potassium and magnesium, which are two of the most common components of antacids, because they are considered bases on the pH scale. These two minerals are both very effective in neutralizing the acids and thus helping to check acidosis and other related conditions.

Sexual Dysfunction:

Raisins have long been known to stimulate the libido and induce arousal, primarily due to the presence of an amino acid called Arginine, which is beneficial in treating erectile dysfunctions. Arginine also increases the levels of sperm motility, which can increase the chances of conception when engaging in sexual intercourse. It is a common practice in India to make the bride and the groom drink a glass of milk each, boiled with raisins and added with a pinch of saffron on their wedding night. It is also recommended for those suffering from issues of sexual endurance to consume raisins regularly, and whatever beneficial sexual affects you experience will be further aided by the immediate energy boost that raisins often provide.

Bone Health:

Calcium, which is the main element of our bones, is present in raisins, and these dried fruits are also one of the best sources of Boron, a micronutrient. For those of you who don't know, a micronutrient is a nutrient required by the body in very small amount as compared to other nutrients that must be consumed daily in significant amounts. Boron is vital for proper bone formation and efficient absorption of calcium. Boron is particularly helpful in preventing osteoporosis induced by menopause in women and has been shown to be very beneficial for bones and joints. Potassium is another essential nutrient found in high levels in raisins which can help strengthen bones and promote bone growth, thereby reducing the chances of osteoporosis in all types of people.

Dental Care:

Oleanolic Acid, one of the phytochemicals present in raisins, plays a crucial role in protecting your teeth against tooth decay, cavities, and teeth brittleness. It effectively prevents the growth of *Streptococcus Mutans* and *Porphyromonas Gingivalis*, two of the bacterial species that are most responsible for cavities and other dental



Healthy Foods

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problems. In addition, it is rich in calcium which is good for promoting dental health, as it prevents breaking or peeling away of teeth and enamel while making them stronger. As strange as it may sound, when eating raisins, the longer they stick to your teeth, the better, because that ensures extended contact of Oleanolic Acid with the teeth, increasing the preventative powers against bacterial growth. In addition its role in bone health and osteoporosis treatment, the boron present in raisins plays a very important role in curbing the growth of oral germs as well as in promoting strong teeth.

Other Benefits:

The fibers in raisins also help promote excretion of bile from the body, and it stimulates the burning of cholesterol, thereby promoting good cardiac health. Furthermore, the amount of fiber in raisins helps to literally sweep out the toxins and harmful materials in the digestive tract, which can protect people from additional intestinal diseases, and bacterial growth that is eliminated when the toxins are swept out.