[https://www.healthline.com/nutrition/6-healthiest-seeds#section3](https://www.healthline.com/nutrition/6-healthiest-seeds" \l "section3)

**2. Chia Seeds**

[Chia seeds](https://www.healthline.com/nutrition/11-proven-health-benefits-of-chia-seeds) are very similar to flaxseeds because they are also good sources of fiber and omega-3 fats, along with a number of other nutrients.

A 1-ounce (28-gram) serving of chia seeds contains ([15](http://nutritiondata.self.com/facts/nut-and-seed-products/3061/2)):

* **Calories:** 137
* **Fiber:** 10.6 grams
* **Protein:** 4.4 grams
* **Monounsaturated fat:** 0.6 grams
* **Omega-3 fats:** 4.9 grams
* **Omega-6 fats:** 1.6 grams
* **Thiamine (vitamin B1):** 15% of the RDI
* **Magnesium:** 30% of the RDI
* **Manganese:** 30% of the RDI

Like flaxseeds, chia seeds also contain a number of important antioxidant polyphenols.

Interestingly, a number of studies have shown that eating chia seeds can increase ALA in the blood. ALA is an important omega-3 fatty acid that can help reduce inflammation ([16Trusted Source](https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/22830971), [17Trusted Source](https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/19628108)).

Your body can convert ALA into other omega-3 fats, such as eicosapentaenoic acid (EPA) and docosahexaenoic acid (DHA), which are the omega-3 fats found in oily fish. However, this conversion process in the body is usually quite inefficient.

One study has shown that chia seeds may be able to increase levels of EPA in the blood ([18Trusted Source](https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/22538527)).

Chia seeds may also help reduce blood sugar. A couple of studies have shown that whole and ground chia seeds are equally effective for reducing blood sugar immediately after a meal ([19Trusted Source](https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/23778782), [20Trusted Source](https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/20087375)).

Another study found that, as well as reducing blood sugar, chia seeds may reduce appetite ([14Trusted Source](https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/28000689)).

Chia seeds may also reduce risk factors of heart disease ([21Trusted Source](https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/25403867)).

A study of 20 people with type 2 diabetes found that eating 37 grams of chia seeds per day for 12 weeks reduced blood pressure and levels of several inflammatory chemicals, including C-reactive protein (CRP) ([22Trusted Source](https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/17686832)).

**SUMMARY:**Chia seeds are a good source of omega-3 fats and are effective at lowering blood sugar and reducing risk factors for heart disease.

**3. Hemp Seeds**

Hemp seeds are an excellent source of vegetarian protein. In fact, they contain more than 30% protein, as well as many other essential nutrients.

[Hemp seeds](https://www.healthline.com/nutrition/6-health-benefits-of-hemp-seeds) are one of the few plants that are complete protein sources, meaning they contain all the essential amino acids that your body can't make.

Studies have also shown that the protein quality of hemp seeds is better than most other plant protein sources ([23Trusted Source](https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/20977230)).

A 1-ounce (28-gram) serving of hemp seeds contains ([24Trusted Source](https://ndb.nal.usda.gov/ndb/foods/show/3614)):

* **Calories:**155
* **Fiber:** 1.1 grams
* **Protein:** 8.8 grams
* **Monounsaturated fat:** 0.6 grams
* **Polyunsaturated fat:** 10.7 grams
* **Magnesium:** 45% of the RDI
* **Thiamine (vitamin B1):** 31% of the RDI
* **Zinc:** 21% of the RDI

The proportion of [omega-6 to omega-3 fats](https://www.healthline.com/nutrition/optimize-omega-6-omega-3-ratio) in hemp seed oil is roughly 3:1, which is considered a good ratio. Hemp seeds also contain gamma-linolenic acid, an important anti-inflammatory fatty acid ([25Trusted Source](https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/24552275)).

For this reason, many people take hemp seed oil supplements.

Hemp seed oil may have a beneficial effect on heart health by increasing the amount of omega-3 fatty acids in the blood ([26Trusted Source](https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC2868018/), [27Trusted Source](https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/17103080), [28Trusted Source](https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/18460481)).

The anti-inflammatory action of the omega-3 fatty acids may also help improve symptoms of eczema.

One study found that people with eczema experienced less skin dryness and itchiness after taking hemp seed oil supplements for 20 weeks. They also used skin medication less, on average ([29Trusted Source](https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/16019622)).

**SUMMARY:**Hemp seeds are a great source of protein and contain all the essential amino acids. Hemp seed oil may help reduce symptoms of eczema and other chronic inflammatory conditions.

**5. Pumpkin Seeds**

Pumpkin seeds are one of the most commonly consumed types of seeds, and are good sources of phosphorus, monounsaturated fats and omega-6 fats.

A 1-ounce (28-gram) serving of pumpkin seeds contains ([37](http://nutritiondata.self.com/facts/nut-and-seed-products/3066/2)):

* **Calories:** 151
* **Fiber:** 1.7 grams
* **Protein:** 7 grams
* **Monounsaturated fat:** 4 grams
* **Omega-6 fats:** 6 grams
* **Manganese:** 42% of the RDI
* **Magnesium:** 37% of the RDI
* **Phosphorus:** 33% of the RDI

[Pumpkin seeds](https://www.healthline.com/nutrition/11-benefits-of-pumpkin-seeds) are also good sources of phytosterols, which are plant compounds that may help lower blood cholesterol ([38Trusted Source](https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/16302759)).

These seeds have been reported to have a number of health benefits, likely due to their wide range of nutrients.

One observational study of more than 8,000 people found that those who had a higher intake of pumpkin and sunflower seeds had a significantly reduced risk of breast cancer ([39Trusted Source](https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/22591208)).

Another study in children found that pumpkin seeds may help lower the risk of bladder stones by reducing the amount of calcium in urine ([40Trusted Source](https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/3799495)).

Bladder stones are similar to kidney stones. They’re formed when certain minerals crystalize inside the bladder, which leads to abdominal discomfort.

A couple of studies have shown that pumpkin seed oil can improve symptoms of prostate and urinary disorders ([41Trusted Source](https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC2809240/), [42Trusted Source](https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4032845/)).

These studies also showed that pumpkin seed oil may reduce symptoms of overactive bladder and improve quality of life for men with enlarged prostates.

A study of postmenopausal women also found that pumpkin seed oil may help reduce blood pressure, increase “good” HDL cholesterol and improve menopause symptoms ([43Trusted Source](https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/21545273)).

**SUMMARY:**Pumpkin seeds and pumpkin seed oil are good sources of monounsaturated and omega-6 fats, and may help improve heart health and symptoms of urinary disorders.

**6. Sunflower Seeds**

Sunflower seeds contain a good amount of protein, monounsaturated fats and vitamin E. One ounce (28 grams) of sunflower seeds contains ([44](http://nutritiondata.self.com/facts/nut-and-seed-products/3076/2)):

* **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.

An observational study of more than 6,000 adults found that a high intake of nuts and seeds was associated with reduced inflammation ([45Trusted Source](https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/16357111)).

In particular, consuming sunflower seeds more than five times per week was associated with reduced levels of C-reactive protein (CRP), a key chemical involved in inflammation.

Another study examined whether eating nuts and seeds affected blood cholesterol levels in postmenopausal women with type 2 diabetes ([46Trusted Source](https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/24959542)).

The women consumed 30 grams of sunflower seeds or almonds as part of a healthy diet every day for three weeks.

By the end of the study, both the almond and sunflower seed groups had experienced reduced total cholesterol and LDL cholesterol. The sunflower seed diet reduced triglycerides in the blood more than the almond diet, though.

However, “good” HDL cholesterol was also reduced, suggesting that sunflower seeds may reduce both good and bad types of cholesterol.

**SUMMARY:**Sunflower seeds contain high levels of both monounsaturated and omega-6 fats, and may help reduce inflammation and cholesterol levels.

## The Bottom Line

Seeds are great sources of healthy fats, vegetarian protein, fiber and antioxidant polyphenols.

Furthermore, they can help reduce the risk of certain diseases. In particular, the lignans in certain seeds may help lower cholesterol and the risk of cancer.

Seeds are extremely easy to add to salads, yogurt, oatmeal and smoothies, and can be an easy way to add healthy nutrients to your diet.