



Flaxseed

A Review of the Reported Health Benefits



Uses of Flaxseed

Ground flaxseed is most commonly used as a **laxative** and is also used for **hot flashes** and **breast pain**.

Flaxseed oil is used to treat **arthritis**.

Both ground flaxseed and flaxseed oil have been used as a treatment for **high cholesterol level** and also as a treatment for **cancer prevention**.

Flax (*Linum usitatissimum*) produces small, flat seeds ranging in color from golden yellow to reddish brown. The seeds can be consumed as whole seed, ground (powder or meal), or as flaxseed oil. Flaxseed has many health benefits and there has been a large increase in sales of flax products.

Most of the benefits reported from flaxseed consumption are believed to be due to three important components found in flaxseeds: **α-linolenic acid (ALA)**, **lignans**, and **fiber**.

Flaxseed Oil

Flaxseed oil is a unique vegetable oil in that it is composed of 73% polyunsaturated fatty acids (PUFA), 18% monounsaturated fatty acids (MUFA) and 9% saturated fatty acids (SFA), making it a low-saturated fat food. It is also the richest known source of the omega 3 (n-3) fatty acid, ALA, which comprises 55% of the total fatty acids. In fact, the percent of fat as ALA in flaxseed oil is 5.5 times higher than the next highest sources, walnuts and canola

Composition of Flaxseed Based on Serving Size of One Tablespoon

Form of Flaxseed	Weight (g)	Energy (kcal)	ALA (g)	Total Dietary Fiber (g)	Soluble Fiber	SDG Content (mg)
Whole Seed	11	50	2.5	3.0	0.75	8.8
Ground Seed	8	36	1.8	2.2	0.55	6.4
Flaxseed Oil	14	124	8.0	0.0	0.0	0.0

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