



# Know Your Pumpkin Seed Protein!



<i>General Health Benefits of Pumpkin Seed Powder</i>	<i>1</i>
<i>9 Top Health Benefits of Pumpkin Seeds by Dr. Mercola</i>	<i>1</i>
<i>Pumpkin Seed Protein Chains</i>	<i>3</i>
<i>Pumpkin Seeds for Prostate Problems and Preventing Hair Loss</i>	<i>3</i>
<i>Pumpkin Seed Benefits for Hair</i>	<i>5</i>
<i>Problem: Trouble Staying Asleep?</i>	<i>6</i>



### General Health Benefits of Pumpkin Seed Powder

**1) Cholesterol-Lowering:** Pumpkin seed powder has a high content of phytosterols, plant-based compounds that can reduce LDL "bad" cholesterol levels. Pumpkin seeds and other foods are naturally rich in phytosterols. The *Journal of Agricultural Food Chemistry* published a study in 2005 demonstrating that pumpkin seeds were one of the top three foods in terms of highest phytosterol content. This attribute of pumpkin seeds was compared to other nuts and seeds in the United States.

**2) Alkaline-Forming:** Consuming alkaline-forming foods can help maintain balanced pH levels in the body, particularly in overly acidic diets. Pumpkin seeds are the only seeds that are alkaline-forming, making them an excellent addition to Western diets which are often too acidic. Studies indicate that eating more alkaline-forming foods can support cardiovascular health, maintain strong bones, and improve brain function.

**3) Regulate Blood Sugar Levels:** Eating pumpkin seeds is a great option for diabetics looking to control their insulin levels. A 2010 study published in the *Journal of Diabetes and Its Complications* found that consuming a diet supplemented by a mixture of pumpkin seed and flaxseed helped improve blood sugar regulation and antioxidant activity in diabetic rats.

**4) Restful Sleep:** Feeling restless at night? Pumpkin seed powder might be the key to getting a good night's sleep. Pumpkin seed powder is rich in the amino acid tryptophan, which aids in the production of serotonin in the brain. An appropriate balance of the neurotransmitter serotonin is responsible for regulating mood, sleep, and appetite. It is particularly helpful for people who have trouble sleeping at night.

**5) Prostate Health:** Pumpkin seeds are packed with zinc and other antioxidants to reduce the risk for prostate disease. A 2009 study published in *Nutrition Research and Practice* found that supplementation of pumpkin seed oil and saw palmetto oil may be effective in treating benign prostatic hyperplasia, also referred to as enlarged prostate.

### 9 Top Health Benefits of Pumpkin Seeds by Dr. Mercola

#### 1. Heart Healthy Magnesium

One-quarter cup of pumpkin seeds contains nearly half of the recommended daily amount of magnesium, which participates in a wide range of vitally important physiological functions, including the creation of ATP (adenosine triphosphate, the energy molecules of your body), the synthesis of RNA and DNA, the pumping of your heart, proper bone and tooth formation, relaxation of your blood vessels, and proper bowel function.

Magnesium has been shown to benefit your blood pressure and help prevent sudden cardiac arrest, heart attack, and stroke, yet an estimated 80 percent of Americans are deficient in this important mineral.

#### 2. Zinc for Immune Support

Pumpkin seeds are a rich source of zinc (one ounce contains more than 2 mg of this beneficial mineral). Zinc is important to your body in many ways, including immunity, cell growth and



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division, sleep, mood, your senses of taste and smell, eye and skin health, insulin regulation, and male sexual function.

Many are deficient in zinc due to mineral-depleted soils, drug effects, plant-based diets, and other diets high in grain. This deficiency is associated with increased colds and flu, chronic fatigue, depression, acne, low birth weight babies, learning problems and poor school performance in children, among others.

### **3. Plant-Based Omega-3 Fats**

Raw nuts and seeds, including pumpkin seeds, are one of the best sources of plant-based omega-3s (alpha-linolenic acid or ALA). We all need ALA, however, ALA has to be converted by your body into the far more essential omega-3 fats EPA and DHA -- by an enzyme in which the vast majority of us have impaired by high insulin levels. So, while pumpkin seeds are an excellent source of ALA, I believe it is essential to get some of your omega-3 fats from animal sources, such as krill oil, as well.

### **4. Prostate Health**

Pumpkin seeds have long been valued as an important natural food for men's health. This is in part because of their high zinc content, which is important for prostate health (where it is found in the highest concentrations in the body), and also because pumpkin seed extracts and oils may play a role in treating benign prostatic hyperplasia (BPH, or enlarged prostate). Research suggests that both pumpkin seed oil and pumpkin seeds may be particularly beneficial in supporting prostate health.

### **5. Anti-Diabetic Effects**

Animal studies suggest that pumpkin seeds may help improve insulin regulation and help prevent diabetic complications by decreasing oxidative stress.

### **6. Benefits for Postmenopausal Women**

Pumpkin seeds is rich in natural phytoestrogens and studies suggest it may lead to a significant increase in good "HDL" cholesterol along with decreases in blood pressure, hot flashes, headaches, joint pains and other menopausal symptoms in postmenopausal women.

### **7. Heart and Liver Health**

Pumpkin seeds, rich in healthy fats, antioxidants and fibers, may provide benefits for heart and liver health, particularly when mixed with flax seeds.

### **8. Tryptophan for Restful Sleep**

Pumpkin seeds are a rich source of tryptophan, an amino acid (protein building block) that your body converts into serotonin, which in turn is converted into melatonin, the "sleep hormone." Eating pumpkin seeds a few hours before bed, along with a carbohydrate like a small piece of fruit, may be especially beneficial for providing your body the tryptophan needed for your



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melatonin and serotonin production to help promote a restful night's sleep.

### 9. Anti-Inflammatory Benefits

Pumpkin seeds has been found to exhibit anti-inflammatory effects. One animal study even found it worked as well as the anti-inflammatory drug indomethacin in treating arthritis, but without the side effects.

## Pumpkin Seed Protein Chains

<b>Alanine</b>	<b>Lysine</b>
<b>Arginine</b>	<b>Methionine</b>
<b>Aspartic Acid</b>	<b>Phenylalanine</b>
<b>Cysteine</b>	<b>Proline</b>
<b>Glutamic Acid</b>	<b>Serine</b>
<b>Glycine</b>	<b>Threonine</b>
<b>Histidine</b>	<b>Tyrosine</b>
<b>Isoleucine</b>	<b>Tryptophan</b>
<b>Leucine</b>	<b>Valine</b>

## Pumpkin Seeds for Prostate Problems and Preventing Hair Loss



Raw pumpkin seeds are a high protein and mineral rich food that have some specific benefits for hair loss prevention and protecting men against prostate problems.

Here's just what makes pumpkin seeds so good for both preventing hair loss and improving your prostate health if you are a man.

BHP, Dihydrotestosterone and Pumpkin Seeds

Benign prostatic hyperplasia, commonly called BPH, is a painful male condition that leads to constriction of the urethra and difficulty urinating.



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It is quite common in older men but there are several health nutrients in pumpkin seeds that can help by reducing dihydrotestosterone, the primary cause of BHP.

### Delta-7-Sterine

The first of these is a mild steroidal compound called delta-7-sterine. Research has found delta-7-sterine directly competes with the much more potent dihydrotestosterone (DHT) at the receptor sites in the prostate.

DHT is strongly implicated in prostate cell proliferation, but when delta-7-sterine is present in the diet in large enough amounts, it appears to minimize the harmful effects of dihydrotestosterone on the prostate.

### Beta-Sitosterol

Pumpkin seeds contain high levels of phytosterols, including the much studied beta-sitosterol. Beta-sitosterol has been shown to block the conversion of testosterone to dihydrotestosterone by inhibiting the enzyme 5-alpha-reductase.

This can have many positive effects, like a reduction in hair loss, but specifically for prostate problems, the less excess DHT in the body to act upon the prostate the better.

In a double-blind placebo-controlled study of treating benign prostatic hyperplasia with phytosterols, BPH symptoms were shown to be 'significantly improved in the treatment group' with no side effects noted.

### Zinc

The high zinc content in pumpkin seeds is another reason why they are considered so good for guarding against prostate problems.

Zinc is important for proper hormone production, including testosterone. It also has antioxidant and anti-inflammatory properties and is said to enhance your immune response. All of these are potentially beneficial for a man suffering from an enlarged prostate.

Zinc is also needed for healthy hair and a deficiency in this mineral is often associated with hair loss as it directly affects the proper functioning of your hair follicles.

### Other Nutrition for a Healthy Prostate in Pumpkin Seeds

Pumpkin seeds also contain other protective factors to help prevent or treat prostate problems, such as good levels of antioxidant carotenoids like beta-carotene, magnesium and essential fatty acids.

The incidence of male prostate problems has been found to be considerably lower in countries where pumpkin seeds are often consumed, like Austria and Hungary.



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This is hardly surprising with all of the different nutrients in pumpkin seeds and eating them regularly may help moderate dihydrotestosterone levels, reduce an enlarged prostate and relieve the symptoms of benign prostatic hyperplasia.

### **Pumpkin Seeds and Hair Loss**

Excessive dihydrotestosterone can cause many problems for men, particularly later in life. The same DHT responsible for enlarging the prostate and causing benign prostatic hyperplasia, also contributes to hair loss and eventually male pattern baldness.

DHT causes hair loss in men by shortening the anagen (growth) phase of the hair follicle. This can lead to progressively finer and weaker hairs that, over time, simply stop growing.

However, the beta-sitosterol in pumpkin seeds has been shown to act as an inhibitor of the enzyme 5-alpha-reductase. It's this enzyme that converts testosterone to hair damaging dihydrotestosterone.

Black currant oil is another natural DHT blocker and well worth investigating if you are looking for a natural treatment for hair loss. For some serious hair nutrition, that promotes hair growth and combats hair loss and grey hairs, try this new smoothie recipe.

While we are supposed to have some DHT, most men would feel a lot better and have fewer health problems if there were a little less of this testosterone conversion to dihydrotestosterone happening in our bodies.

Snacking on a handful of DHT blocking raw pumpkin seed like these regularly is a great tasting way of lessening testosterone conversion to dihydrotestosterone, minimizing hair loss and promoting healthy hair growth.

Delta-7-sterine is also believed to reduce the damaging effects excessive DHT by competing with it at receptor sites. This is hard to observe and confirm with something like hair follicles, but many people report a reduction in hair loss when they make pumpkin seeds a regular addition to their diet.

In fact, some people go so far as to apply pumpkin seed oil directly to their scalp before bed. The idea is to allow the delta-7-sterine, beta-sitosterol, essential fatty acids and other beneficial nutrients in pumpkin seeds to act directly on the hair follicles overnight. With pumpkin seed oil quite a striking deep green color, I think I'll personally stick with snacking on the seeds and using the rich tasting oil in recipes to maintain healthy hair.

### **Pumpkin Seed Benefits for Hair**

- Pumpkin seeds contain beta-sitosterol which inhibits the 5-alpha-reductase enzyme that converts testosterone to dihydrotestosterone. Excessive DHT causes hair loss and male pattern baldness by attaching to hair follicles and reducing their growth phase.
- The delta-7-sterine compound found in pumpkin seeds also competes with dihydrotestosterone at receptor sites in the body.



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- Pumpkin seeds promote hair growth with their high levels of zinc, magnesium, essential fatty acids and antioxidants.

While pumpkin seeds are especially beneficial for men concerned about maintaining a healthy prostate and avoiding BHP, they are actually a very healthy superfood for women as well with their high levels of nutrition.

Given how concerned everyone is about their appearance these days though, for many of us the hair benefits of pumpkin seeds alone are more than enough reason to start enjoying some delicious raw pumpkin seeds like these regularly.

### **Problem: Trouble Staying Asleep?**

#### **Solution: Pumpkin Seed Powder**

Pumpkin seeds and the powder from pumpkin seeds have relatively high amounts of the amino acid tryptophan. Tryptophan is the amino acid the body uses to make the feel-good and relaxation neurotransmitter serotonin. Pumpkin seeds also contain high amounts of zinc, which can help the brain convert tryptophan into serotonin. Serotonin levels are typically low in people who cannot stay asleep and wake throughout the night.

It is best to the powder with applesauce or another healthy carbohydrate; the carbohydrate allows the tryptophan to get into the brain in higher amounts.

By Pina LoGiudice ND, LAc and Peter Bongiorno ND, LAc Directors of [Inner Source Health](#)

- Pumpkin Seed Powder is considered one of the best protein products among organic foods. Now being recognized as a Superfood!
- High source of vitamin K, good source of plant sterols.
- Pumpkin seed powder is a balanced source of good proteins.
- Pumpkin seed powder is an excellent supplement and eases insomnia.
- Great sleep aid!
- Mood enhancer during day, helps the winter blues.
- Provides a nice restful sleep at the end of the day.
- Great source of Tryptophan Amino Acid.