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healing foods

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# hemp seed

Get a taste of this rich source of anti-inflammatory omegas



## supplement savvy

To boost your protein intake, add  $\frac{1}{4}$  cup hemp protein powder to smoothies, or when baking try it in place of one-quarter of the amount of flour called for in recipes.

**HOW IT HEALS** The only “high” you’ll get from the seed of the *Cannabis sativa* plant is confidence that you’re nurturing your body with its wealth of healthful contents. The variety of hemp grown for food production in Canada—commercial cultivation is not legal in the U.S.—harbors virtually no THC (tetrahydrocannabinol), the active ingredient in marijuana. What hemp does provide is an ideal ratio (roughly 3 to 1) of omega-6 to omega-3 fatty acids. “When these essential fats are consumed in this ratio, the anti-inflammatory effect helps fend off a number of conditions, including diabetes, certain cancers, and autoimmune and heart diseases,” says Bastyr University associate professor and certified nutritionist Jennifer Adler. What’s more, hemp seed is a rich source of gamma-linolenic acid, an omega-6 fatty acid that may quell inflammation, improve skin health, and inhibit cancer cell growth.

Additionally, hemp seed’s store of essential amino acids is replete with arginine; research in the journal *Nutrition* suggests that consuming foods abundant in arginine could lower your risk for cardiovascular disease. The bounty of nutrients in hemp seed also includes vitamin E. “As an antioxidant, vitamin E can help neutralize cell-attacking free radicals,” Adler notes.

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**EAT IT UP** The nutty flavor of shelled hemp seeds makes them an appealing garnish for soups, salads, stir-fries, puddings, fruit pies, oatmeal, or yogurt. Or toss a handful into the batter of such baked goods as quick breads, cookies, and muffins. To preserve freshness, refrigerate the seeds after opening, and store in a tightly sealed container.

The oil produced by cold-pressing hemp seeds adds earthy notes to pestos, dips, and salad dressings. Because hemp oil's wealth of unsaturated fats aren't heat stable, cooking with it isn't advised.

Mix hemp milk, made by grinding hemp seeds with filtered water, into smoothies, hot cocoa, or pancake batter; stir into your morning coffee; or pour over cold cereal (but watch out for added sweeteners in flavored versions). Spread creamy hemp seed nut butter on toast, whole-grain crackers, or sliced apples.