

Is it a good idea to add chia seeds to your diabetes diet?

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Intake of chia seeds along with a balanced diet can help in weight loss, which can contribute to managing diabetes. DR RITESH GUPTA, Endocrinologist



Diabetes is a debilitating disease that affects millions across the world. A person with diabetes may have high blood sugar levels due to a lack of insulin in their system. It is important to follow a healthy lifestyle to keep diabetes at bay. Consuming chia seeds, for instance, has been advocated as a good source of nutrients for people with diabetes. Dr Ritesh Gupta, director ... diabetes and endocrinology, Fortis C Doc Hospital, New Delhi, explains how chia seeds are good for people suffering from diabetes.

Chia seeds are a great source of omega-3 fatty acids, fibre, and magnesium. All these nutrients can help mitigate the risk of complications of type 2 diabetes. “Regular intake of chia seeds along with a balanced diet can help in weight loss as well and we all know, losing weight can significantly contribute to managing diabetes. Moreover, Chia seeds are antiinflammatory in nature, so it helps to control your excess amount of glucose levels in the blood,” says Dr Gupta.

INCLUDE CHIA SEEDS IN YOUR DIET

One ounce of chia seeds contains 10gm of fibre, of which an adult can consume between 22.4gm and 33.6gm of fibre each day, depending on their age and sex. “Two tablespoons or 20 gm of chia seeds a day is recommended if you are diabetic,” he says. You can add chia seeds to your diet by soaking “a tablespoon of chia seeds in a bottle of water and adding thinly sliced pieces of lemon to it. Consume it after an hour of making the drink”. Another way to add chia seeds to your diabetes diet is salads. “While adding fresh fruits, vegetables and nuts are advisable, sprinkling seeds such as chia and flax will make the salad fibre-rich, and also help keep your blood sugar levels stable,” he says.

SIDE EFFECTS OF CHIA SEEDS

While chia seeds offer multiple benefits for people suffering from diabetes, overconsumption can lead to problems. Some of the common side effects of chia seeds may affect people, including those suffering from diabetes, high blood pressure, allergies, or digestive issues. “Anything, if over consumed, may cause adverse effects. Therefore, eating more than recommended quantities of chia seeds for diabetes management may result in side effects such as lowering blood glucose levels to the extent that the person may require an insulin dosage adjustment,” says the endocrinologist.

Whether or not you add chia seeds to your diet, one thing you should keep in mind is consulting a doctor. Also, ask them about the amount of consuming chia seeds to control blood glucose levels.*