

Chia seeds are a superfood treasure

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(NaturalNews) Many people know that flax seed is a good source of omega-3 fatty acids and will be happy to know that they have another available source in the chia seed. This tiny seed has many advantages over flax; it doesn't need to be ground to access the nutrients, and the seeds can be stored for long periods of time without deteriorating. Chia is rich in omega-3 fatty acids, even more so than flax. The ALA (alpha linolenic fatty acid) that is in chia seeds is the only known essential omega-3 fatty acid that the body can't produce on its own. Omega-3 is found in foods such as chia seed, flax seed, flax oil, olive oil, walnuts, fish, kale, spinach, cauliflower and broccoli to name a few.

Chia seeds provide the body with protein, vitamins and minerals

Chia also provides the body with vitamins A, B, E and D and minerals such as calcium, copper, iron, magnesium, manganese, molybdenum, niacin, phosphorous, potassium, silicon, sodium, sulphur, thiamine and zinc. Chia seeds are also a wonderful source of protein. Proteins are the building blocks of the body, hair, skin, nails, muscles, red blood cells, as well as essential and non essential amino acids and fiber, all of which are necessary for good circulation and a healthy heart. Chia seeds also help to modulate blood sugar, which is wonderful news for diabetics. When it comes to fiber in our diets we are all lacking. By simply adding one ounce (2.75 tablespoons) of chia to your diet, you are adding 11 grams of fiber.

Chia seeds a nutritional powerhouse

If you're looking to boost your nutritional intake, look no further than the humble chia seed. Per gram chia seeds contain:

- 8x more omega-3 than salmon
- 6x more calcium than milk
- 3x more iron than spinach
- 15x more magnesium than broccoli
- 2x more fiber than bran flakes
- 6x more protein than kidney beans
- 4x more phosphorous than whole milk

Incorporating chia seeds into your diet

With all the positive benefits this little seed can offer, you may be wondering how to incorporate

chia seeds into your diet. Here are a few simple suggestions:

- Sprinkle ground or whole chia on your cereal, yogurt or salad
- Grind them into flour and add to your baked goods
- Make a seed blend and add a tablespoon or so to your smoothie for a protein and fiber boost
- As an egg substitute in baking: Add a tablespoon of ground chia with 3 tablespoons of water, per egg in a recipe.
- Mix with flour and seasoning next time you are making a breaded fish, chicken or veggie dish, it will add a wonderful nutty flavor and crunch.
- Make a chia gel. To make chia gel, place 1/3 cup chia seeds into an air tight container, add 2 cups of water, and whisk briskly. Let the mixture sit for 5-10 minutes, and then whisk again before placing into the refrigerator. The mixture will turn into a gel, and will last up to 3 weeks if refrigerated. The gel can be incorporated into jam, cereal, yogurt, smoothies, or any other foods for consumption.