



## WHAT ARE THEIR NUTRITIONAL PROPERTIES?

Pumpkin seeds are a veritable powerhouse of nutrients! They are a very good source of the minerals phosphorus, magnesium, manganese, and copper. Plus they offer a decent amount of the minerals zinc and iron. One-quarter of a cup contains 74% RDA of manganese, 57% RDA of phosphorus, 48% RDA of copper, 48% RDA of magnesium, 23% RDA of zinc, 20% RDA of protein, and 16% RDA of iron.

## HOW CAN EATING PUMPKIN SEEDS REDUCE STRESS?

You will be very surprised at how effective they are! Eating toasted pumpkin seeds helps reduce stress primarily by the act of chewing (mastication). Mastication is a very effective behavior for coping with stress. Research shows that mastication under stressful conditions increases dopamine, decreases cortisol levels, and reduces mental stress. To maximise the dopamine-raising, stress-reducing effect of chewing it is best to:

*\*\*eat your pumpkin seeds one at a time\*\**

The ritual of picking one up one seed, eating one seed, picking up another seed, eating another seed... is relaxing in itself, and is quite meditative.

## HUH... PUMPKIN SEEDS AND SEROTONIN??

Pumpkin seeds are also a great source of tryptophan, the amino acid that produces serotonin. A ¼ cup of pumpkin seeds contains about 50% of the daily-recommended value.

## LET'S MAKE TOASTED PUMPKIN SEEDS!!

It's very easy! All you will be doing is stirring pumpkin seeds in dry frying pan, until they are cooked – then stirring in Tamari moments before you take the frying pan off the heat.

Note: **don't add any oil.**

1. place a dry frying pan (no oil) on medium heat until hot
2. toss in your pumpkin seeds
3. let the pumpkin seeds heat a little, maybe for a minute or two
4. after that initial heat-through... stir the seeds. Stir, stir, stir, stir...
6. keep stirring them until they are toasted – you will develop an eye for when seeds are optimally toasted
7. keeping the frying pan on the hotplate, toss in the Tamari. As you make subsequent batches you will work out how much Tamari to add to suit your taste.
8. stir the pumpkin seeds until the Tamari has evaporated and they no longer look shiny
9. put a piece of kitchen towel on a dinner plate, and spread the seeds out over this, to cool
10. NB: if you leave them out too long the salt in the Tamari will absorb the water from the atmosphere and the seeds will become a bit soft; likewise if you put them in a jar too soon they will sweat and also become a bit soft. Just let them cool to room temperature, and either store them in a jar... or eat them!

I hope you find this factsheet helpful.  
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