

# The Amazing Pumpkin Seed

by Tessa Jupp RN OAM - ref: [www://food.ndtv.com/8-pumpkin-seed-benefits](http://www.food.ndtv.com/8-pumpkin-seed-benefits)

## Are we throwing away one of our most useful foods?

The humble pumpkin seed is very healthy, a great source of unsaturated fats, vitamins, minerals and energy. It can improve metabolism, increase antioxidant activity, **reduce blood pressure and bad cholesterol**, treat and prevent osteoporosis, prostate cancer, kidney stones and insomnia.

### Reduces Bad Cholesterol

A compound that is unique to the pumpkin seeds is a unique source of **phytosterols**, which is directly linked to lowering the levels of bad cholesterol, **prevents blood clots** and atherosclerosis, keeps blood vessels healthy, thus **reducing the risk of strokes and heart attacks**.

### Helps with Sleep

Pumpkin seeds contain an abundance of tryptophan, serotonin and magnesium. Studies have shown they both soothe and sedate. Experts recommend eating pumpkin seeds if you have high levels of stress that cause restlessness and insomnia. Eat pumpkin seeds at night for a **restful pain-free sleep**.

### Improves Immune function

The presence of high amounts of antioxidants and phytochemicals ensure a good immune system and reduce the possibility of viral infections that may lead to colds, flu, or fatigue. Pumpkin seeds are rich in phenolic compounds, which combat free radicals in the body.

This property is important because it **inhibits the growth of cancer cells in the body**. Consuming a small to medium serving of pumpkin seeds on a daily basis can serve this purpose.

### Aids Weight Reduction

One of the best snack to lose weight. They might look small, but are very dense and a heavy food high in fibre which takes longer for your body to digest, leaving you feeling full.

### Treats Arthritis and Reduces Inflammation

Studies have revealed that pumpkin seeds have anti-inflammatory properties. There is a direct correlation between reduced arthritis-related joint pain and the consumption of pumpkin seeds. From a medical perspective, this is one of the most popular uses of the pumpkin seed. Pumpkin seed oil has been found to exhibit anti-inflammatory effects. An animal study found it worked as well as the anti-inflammatory, Indocin in treating arthritis, but without the drug's side effects.

### Helps with Diabetes

Pumpkin seeds help improve insulin regulation in diabetics and decreases oxidative stress. These seeds are a rich source of digestible protein that helps stabilise blood sugar levels.

### Limits Parasitic Activity

Medical findings prove eating pumpkin seeds as a snack can eliminate tapeworms and other parasites.



## Prevents and Treats Osteoporosis in Women

The high levels of zinc, copper, calcium and other minerals **increase bone density** and **decrease bone weakness**, both of which are signs of osteoporosis.

### Reduces Blood Pressure

Pumpkin seeds are rich in copper, and copper is known to increase the red blood cell count in the body. They also improve the passage of oxygenated blood. This property, combined with its low sodium content, reduces blood pressure and in turn, improves cardiovascular health. Pumpkin seeds are an invaluable cardiovascular booster.

### Boosts Energy

Pumpkin seeds, having an abundance of protein, can give the body what it needs to raise a low metabolic rate which makes us lethargic, **fatigued**, unhealthy and **weak**. It can also improve brain function. Pumpkin seeds can be consumed when we are feeling tired and unenergetic. They will boost metabolism and sustain the body for a longer period of time. The high calorie content in this seed is a great nutritional supplement for those who need the extra energy for cell and tissue repair.

### Improves Bladder function

In 2014, scientists found evidence that pumpkin seeds help treat urinary disorders in men and women. Eating Pepitas seeds was linked to reduction in symptoms of overactive bladder and strengthening pelvic floor muscles

### Prevents Kidney Stones and Gout

Pumpkin seeds prevent the accumulation of uric acid and other toxins which form kidney stones and gout.

### Improves Prostate Health

Pumpkin seeds act as diuretics, and therefore relieve the symptoms of an inflamed prostate.

### Heals Wounds Faster

From a scraped knee to a surgical cut, eat pumpkin seeds. The high-zinc content promotes healing and helps repair and regenerate damaged tissue faster.

### Nutritional Value

Pumpkin seeds are rich in nutrients like protein, fibre Omega-3, **manganese, tryptophan**, calcium, **potassium, magnesium**, copper, phosphorus, **zinc**, iron, B vitamins, **vitamins K, A** and phytosterol.

### Healthiest way to eat Pumpkin seeds is Raw

Keep some on the coffee table while watching TV or beside your computer. **Eat the seeds for a snack**. If you want an easy method for making pumpkin seeds softer, more digestible, try soaking them in water for 6 hours. You can also roast or toast the seeds. Add them to salads, bread, cakes, biscuits, rice puddings, soups, stews, stir-fry, for a crunchy texture. See sample recipes on page 2.

**To Roast** - remove seeds from pumpkin, rinse thoroughly. Remove stringy, wet attached pulp. Spread seeds in a thin layer on a large baking tray in a preheated 150°C oven for about 30 minutes. Cool. Seal in airtight jar. Also **buy in nut section of local supermarket as pepitas**.

# Bladder problems & Pumpkin seeds

by Tessa Jupp RN OAM

People complain that in cold weather they need to empty their bladder more often! **All muscles contract** (tighten) **more with cold**. Heat relaxes. **Bladders are muscle**. Polio muscles are getting weaker and yes bladders were affected by polio. Just ask polio patients to think back ... and nurses who had to supply the pans or put in catheters. This a common problem anyway, for both men & women.

**On the picture opposite** - we have 2 lots of muscles for bladder function. The bladder is like an upside-down balloon. The opening at the bottom needs to be kept shut tight so it can fill up. This is what the pelvic floor muscles do. The bladder muscles at the top have to relax to allow urine from the kidneys to fill it. To empty, the top bladder muscles have to tighten to squeeze the balloon and the pelvic floor muscles and sphincter opening, relax, for the urine to come out. If the squeeze muscles are weak, the urinary flow is slow (poor pressure) and may not all empty. If the pelvic floor is weak, we get leakage and dribbles.

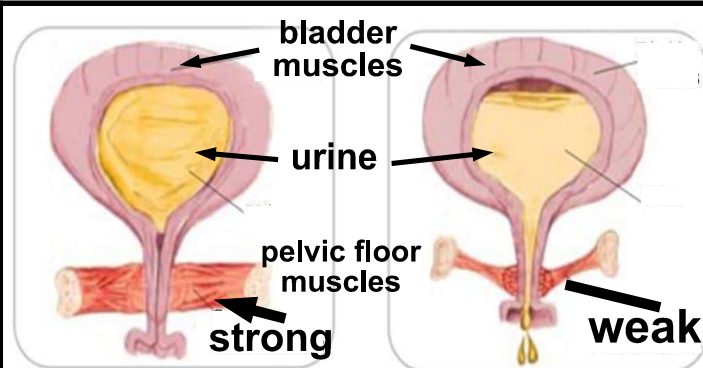
**But can we do something about it?**

Here is info I found in Life Extension Wellness Nov 2008:

**“Pumpkin seeds** exert a tissue-building effect on pelvic floor muscles by inhibiting the aromatase enzyme, thus more testosterone is available to **strengthen the pelvic muscles**, also pumpkin seed fraction binds to the androgen receptor on pelvic muscle cells, inducing a strengthening effect on structural integrity & less urinary tract disorders.”

**So eating pumpkin seeds or taking pumpkin seed oil tablets can help with bladder function.**

The use of pumpkin seeds for bladder control is not new. Data on **“pepitas”** (as pumpkin seeds are also called) was discovered by archaeologists in caves in Mexico, that date back to 7,000 BC. Also very popular in ancient Greece.



**Weak pelvic muscles causes poor bladder control and Urinary Incontinence**

As we get older, these muscles do become weaker, and the bladder walls become stiffer and more rigid losing their elasticity. For men, a swelling prostate, can also press on the bladder and restrict the ability to open. **Pumpkin seeds** can help **reduce prostate inflammation** too.

**Carnitine** strengthens bladder muscle and so increases urinary flow. **Magnesium** strengthens bladder muscle so that it is not overtaken by sudden pressure, relieving the urgent need to “go”. **Vitamin D** also strengthens bladder muscle. The pelvic floor is supported by collagen, and collagen needs **gelatine** and **Vitamin B12**. **Vitamin C** protects against free radical damage that can weaken the bladder wall. **Vitamin E** increases elasticity to expand.

**Exercises** useful for pelvic floor include shifting weight from leg to leg (no need to jump) on a **mini trampoline**. Start with only 1 minute twice a day, gradually increasing time. May take some months to **improve incontinence**.

## Dehydration - do we drink enough?

by Tessa Jupp RN OAM

With bladder problems we often are **told to restrict our fluid intake**. But that can bring on other health problems. We are also told not to have salt, because of the possibility it can increase our blood pressure eg **salt-free** foods now.

This last year we have had polio members hospitalised with **life-threatening consequences of electrolyte imbalances**. We need to maintain a balance of electrolytes, ie the minerals that the body needs, particularly magnesium, potassium, manganese, calcium and sodium.

People have been so brainwashed that salt should be avoided, that they become too low on minerals that are really essential. **We should be using good quality Celtic sea or Himalayan salt**, with 84 or so minerals, sprinkling it on our meals according to individual taste, but not using plain table salt which is only sodium chloride.

We need to **add this good salt to any filtered water** we drink as well. So fill a bottle or jug three quarter full, then **keep adding a pinch of salt and taste**, until you can just taste the salt, then fill up to the top so you can't taste it. This restores the electrolytes back to the equivalent of good quality spring water. Be aware, bottled shop spring water may be varying quality - so think - how does it taste?

**Common symptoms of dehydration** may include nausea, fatigue, headaches, dry mouth and eyes, cramps, bloated stomach, low blood pressure, faintness, poor appetite, poor concentration and brain fog. When our tongue trips over words, **the brain is dehydrated**. **A drink will fix this**.

**Painful joints are often a signal of water shortage**. And drinking plain water is not enough. The **water we boil our vegies in is rich in minerals** - save it and use for drinking or to make **soup, gravy, white sauce** etc. Make some of your drinks, **lemon** or other **fruit juice** with half the glass added **dry ginger ale**. Good and refreshing in hot weather.

**Shortness of breath** is a **common symptom** of dehydration. Our lungs need moisture to operate. Oxygen and carbon dioxide exchange regulates our **acid-alkaline balance**, which affects the bladder and urinary excretion or retention, **making us short of breath**. That is **not asthma**.

As a reaction to chronic dehydration, the body makes more cholesterol to fix abrasions and tears in blood vessels.

**Cholesterol actually saves people's lives** because it acts as a bandage – a **waterproof bandage** – designed by our body. **8-10 glasses** of water fluids a day can significantly **ease back and joint pain** for up to 80% of sufferers.