

## 10 Quinoa Nutrition Benefits

The many **benefits of quinoa nutrition** make this grain a powerful healing food. Here are the top ten reasons I have added quinoa to my diet as a delicious health booster!

### 1. Quinoa is High in Protein

**Quinoa is one of the few grains contains all nine of the essential amino acids.**

Most grains are low in lysine, therefore they are considered incomplete proteins. But, quinoa actually contains **lysine**, as well as all eight of the other amino acids, making it a complete protein, similar to animal proteins.

One cup of quinoa provides about 220 calories and 8 grams of protein. This is the protein equivalent to one egg or approximately one ounce of chicken, fish, or other animal protein.



Quinoa is an amazing superfood, however, I do not recommend consuming quinoa as your primary protein source. Although it does provide 8 grams of protein, it is much higher in calories and carbohydrates than other protein sources.

For example, one large egg contains about 8 grams of protein, but only has about 80 calories and no carbohydrates, whereas you would have to eat 220 calories worth of quinoa to get the same 8 grams of protein. So you would have to eat a huge amount of quinoa to meet your daily protein needs through quinoa alone, which would result in eating a significant number of calories and carbohydrates at the same time.

So enjoy quinoa as a nutritional boost to your diet, but always try to eat many different sources of protein. Diversity is important to balance your diet and get the most benefit out of what you eat.

## 2. Gluten-Free

Quinoa may be beneficial for who are following a gluten-free diet and might be concerned about nutrients they are missing by eliminating gluten-containing grains from their diets. A 2009 study reviewed diet records of patients with celiac disease who followed a gluten-free diet.

The study found most subjects relied heavily on rice as their primary grain source, which made their diet inadequate nutritionally. If the primary grain choice was changed to quinoa, the subjects were able to better meet their protein, iron, calcium, and fiber needs. The B-vitamin content of their diets was also improved by adding in grains like quinoa into the diet.<sup>(3)</sup> Using quinoa as a primary grain instead of other alternatives may help ensure a more balanced diet.<sup>(4)</sup>



## 3. Great Source of Fiber

One of quinoa's primary health benefits is its fiber content. It contains approximately 5 grams of fiber per cooked cup.<sup>(5)</sup> Most of the fiber found in quinoa is insoluble fiber, the type of fiber needed to maintain a healthy digestive system.<sup>(6)</sup>

Another benefit with consuming insoluble fiber is that it provides volume to the diet without any additional calories. Humans are unable to digest insoluble fiber, therefore we cannot extract any calories from it. Food high in insoluble fiber makes us feel full without adding any extra calories.

## 4. Heart Health

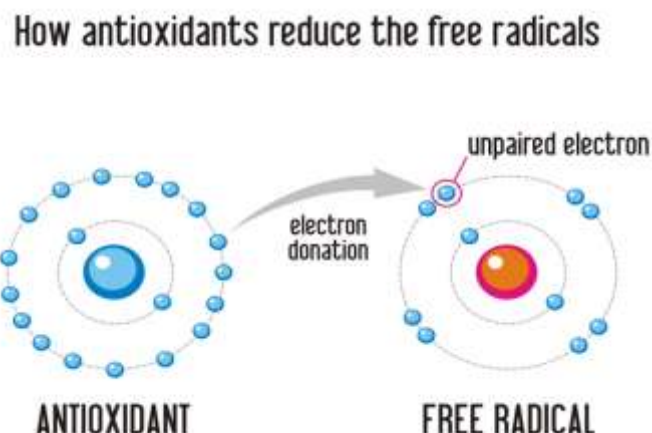
One of the quinoa nutrition benefits is its high level of heart healthy fats. Quinoa contains about 4g of fat per cup, and contains no trans-fats. About 25% of the fat found in quinoa is oleic acid, a healthy monounsaturated fat and 8% is alpha-linolenic acid, the type of omega-3 found in plants.<sup>(7)</sup> Alpha-linolenic acid (ALA) has been shown to decrease the risk of death from heart attacks. The balance of fats is key to a healthy diet.

A diet high in ALA can also help reduce cholesterol and blood pressure levels. ALA is also beneficial for those that suffer from asthma reducing inflammation in the lungs and improving overall lung function. An increased intake in healthy fat may be beneficial to overall health by reducing overall systemic inflammation, leading to a decrease risk of chronic diseases.<sup>(8)</sup>



## 5. Antioxidant

Quinoa is high in a specific type of antioxidants called flavanoids. This group of antioxidants began to be studied in the mid-90s for their disease-reducing benefits. One particular flavonoid, called polyphenols may play a role in the prevention of cardiovascular disease, cancer, osteoporosis and diabetes.<sup>(9)</sup> Quinoa is also high two other antioxidants called quercetin and kaempferol, important for the reduction of inflammation, a risk factor for chronic diseases.<sup>(10)</sup>



## 6. Nutritious Superfood

Quinoa is considered one of the super foods! It is a tremendous source of vitamins and minerals such as riboflavin, magnesium, and iron. Quinoa nutrition is high in many nutrients lacking in our modern diet due to the overconsumption of highly processed foods. It is high in B-vitamins such as riboflavin and folate, which are low in many modern diets as these nutrients tend to be lost during food processing. Since quinoa is a whole grain, it is not refined or processed, therefore all of the important vitamins remain intact.



Quinoa also provides significantly more calcium, iron, magnesium, potassium, and zinc when compared to other grains. About 80% of people have a [magnesium deficiency](#), resulting in chronic leg cramps, muscle pain, insomnia and anxiety.

Quinoa provides about 30% of the RDA for magnesium, making it a good source of this mineral. Many women are deficient in iron due to monthly blood losses and inadequate intakes. [Iron rich food](#) is the best source of iron to repair any iron deficiencies. Since Quinoa provides 15% of the RDA for iron, it is an excellent food to add in to your diet.(11)

One thing to consider is that quinoa is high in phytic acid, which can bind to the minerals in food and decrease their absorption. Therefore, even though quinoa does contain a significant amount of minerals your body may not absorb them all due to the phytic acid content. Soaking quinoa in water prior to use can help reduce the phytic acid content. One cup of quinoa should be soaked in 2 cups of water with 1 tbsp of either fresh lemon juice or goat milk yogurt between 12-24 hours.

## 7. Weight Loss

Due to the high insoluble fiber and protein content, quinoa can help increase the feeling of fullness after a meal, known as *satiety*.

Whole grains have been consistently shown to increase feelings of fullness after meals when compared to refined grains.<sup>(12)</sup> It is also believed that whole grains, like quinoa, may influence the action of hormones that play a role in appetite such as ghrelin, peptide YY, and insulin.<sup>(13)</sup>

Eating foods high in fiber and protein can help slow the rate at which food leaves the stomach, leading to an overall decreased calorie intake. The satiating power of whole grains like quinoa may help to reduce body weight in the long-run.



## 8. Helps Prevent Cancer

Quinoa is rich in flavonoids, plant-based antioxidants that help heal and prevent many types of illnesses, including one called **quercetin**. In fact, Quinoa has one of the highest sources of quercetin naturally occurring in foods (even higher than cranberries). Quercetin has been shown to reduce the risk of multiple types of cancer. <sup>(14)</sup>





## 9. Reduces Diabetes Risk

An increase intake of whole grains, especially those with high fiber content may be linked to a reduction in the risk of type 2 diabetes. One study found that increasing whole grain consumption by two servings per day decreased type 2 diabetes risk by 21%.[\(15\)](#)



Although these results are for whole grains in general, there are some promising results from laboratory studies using quinoa specifically to reduce enzymes connected to the development of type 2 diabetes.[\(16\)](#)

The high quercetin content in quinoa was found to have an increased antioxidant response in lab studies, when compared to other similar grains. Researchers believe that the antioxidant content of whole grains, like quinoa, through their ability to reduce inflammation via their antioxidant activity, may help may help improve overall insulin response and in the long-run reduce the risk of type 2 diabetes.

## 10. Fights Disease

A functional food is a natural food with a high nutritional content that may help reduce disease.[\(17\)](#)

“Functional properties are given also by minerals, vitamins, fatty acids and antioxidants that can make a strong contribution to human nutrition, particularly to protect cell membranes, with proven good results in brain neuronal functions.”

Due to its high protein, fiber, antioxidant, vitamin, and mineral content, quinoa is seen as a functional food that may help reduce the risk of many diseases beyond cardiovascular disease and diabetes.



## Quinoa Hair Masque for dry & damaged hair

Quinoa Hair Mask for dry & damaged hair is enriched with organic oil of Quinoa. The mask contains natural ingredients and is designed to care and rehabilitate dry and damaged hair, while intensively and very effectively nourish and moisture the hair. Quinoa contains a unique composition of vitamins, proteins and essential amino acids which ensure effective rehabilitation from the ends and to the roots of the hair. The combination with the nourishing oils creates a protecting shell around the hair, adds glamor and shine, and protects against environmental damages, coloring or smoothing. This mask is recommended for all hair types that need special care: dry or damaged hair, dyed hair and after smoothing. Also suitable for normal hair to prevent hair loss or and adding vital energy, volume and shine. Suitable for sensitive scalp.

## Quinoa Moisturizing Cream for normal to combination skin

Enriched with organic oil of Quinoa, minerals, amino-acids & green tea extract.

Quinoa & Green Tea Moisturizing Cream was created especially for normal and combination skin to provide deep hydration and to maintain the natural oil-water balance. Its unique formula contains quinoa seeds, rich in vitamins (A, B2, E, D, F), micro and macro elements, and essential amino acids, in combination with green tea extract, famous for its anti-oxidative and anti-inflammatory properties. This moisturizer will leave your skin looking clear, refreshed and lastingly matte. Suitable for everyday use.



## Anti-Inflammatory Benefits

Most of the quinoa studies that we've seen in this area have been animal studies. However, we believe that the preliminary indications for humans are very promising. Research has shown the ability of daily quinoa intake to lower levels of inflammation in fat (adipose) tissue in rats and in the linings of their intestine as well.

We're not surprised at either of these results because a wide range of anti-inflammatory nutrients is already known to be present in quinoa. This list of anti-inflammatory nutrients includes phenolic acids (including hydroxycinnamic and hydroxybenzoic acids), members of the vitamin E family like gamma-tocopherol, and cell wall polysaccharides like arabinans and rhamnogalacturonans.

Somewhat more controversial in this anti-inflammatory nutrient list are the saponins found in quinoa. Saponins are the bitter tasting, water-soluble phytonutrients found in the outer seed coat layer of quinoa. (More specifically, the saponins found in quinoa are derived from hederagenin, oleanic acid, phytolaccagenic acid, and serjanic acid.) The quinoa saponins have been shown to have both anti-inflammatory and antioxidant properties. However, soaking, boiling, and milling can reduce their presence, and, in general, this reduced presence is usually regarded as a good thing since it can make the quinoa much more enjoyable for most people to eat. In research to date, the relationship between and anti-inflammatory benefits of quinoa and saponin levels has yet to be clarified. However, even though more research is needed in this particular phytonutrient area, the list of anti-inflammatory nutrients in quinoa remains impressive.

## Quinoa and Brain function

Brain function health benefits of quinoa. This grain is a great source of riboflavin to reduce the frequency of migraine. Riboflavin, known as vitamin B2, is essential for the metabolism of fats and carbohydrates. This vitamin improves the energy level of your brain and muscle cells.

## Quinoa Taste & Texture

If you haven't tried it yet, when it is just boiled in water quinoa is very plain tasting, as it does not have much flavor on its own. The lack of flavor is actually a great thing increasing its versatility to be used in a variety of recipes. A simple way to boost its flavor is to cook it in beef, chicken, or vegetable broth instead of plain water, this will help add a little bit of depth to the flavor.





The possibilities are endless with [quinoa recipes](#). It can be [substituted for rice](#), pasta, or couscous in casseroles, soups, or other side dishes. Since it is naturally gluten-free it can be turned into flour and used to make gluten-free pasta or other products where wheat flour would normally be used.

**Important:** be aware of processed products such as pastas or breads made out of quinoa flour, these products are usually refined and may not contain the health benefits of eating the grain whole. Processed quinoa products can be used occasionally as a substitute for wheat-containing options.

**But it is easy to make your own quinoa flour!** Just take 1-2 cups of quinoa, toast in a skillet for about 5 minutes until it starts to pop. Keep it on the heat, stirring occasionally for 1-2 minutes, then cool. Mix in a high-speed food processor until it gets a nice fine texture.

## Quinoa Nutrition Tastes Great!

Quinoa is amazing as a salad staple such as in a [quinoa cranberry salad](#) and can be mixed with any of your favorite vegetables.

Get creative and get the most quinoa nutrition by using quinoa as a base for your salad and then add in other vegetables such as tomatoes, green beans, and bell peppers. It also tastes amazing with greens like this [quinoa salad with dark cherries and kale](#), and adds lots of yummy texture to your salads.

And don't be afraid to get creative with quinoa, since it is so plain by itself, it will adapt to most flavors you add to it.

It can also be eaten as a hot cereal or [porridge](#) for breakfast, similar to oatmeal. Or it can be substituted for flour for amazing, high fiber, [high-protein pancakes](#). Best of all, it is a delicious in dessert like this [baked quinoa with apples](#), just add some apples, cinnamon, and pecans. There are so many different ways to use quinoa it truly is one of the most versatile grains available.



### The Glycemic Index Of Quinoa

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Quinoa is an amazing seed (It is eaten like a grain) and has a low glycemic index which makes it a valuable food for those trying to control their glucose levels.

**Quinoas glycemic index ranges between 30-53**, although it will depend on how it is prepared.

If a food has a glycemic index under 55 then it is considered to be a low-glycemic index food which quinoa qualifies with flying colors.

## GLYCEMIC LOAD OF QUINOA

To calculate the glycemic load you will multiple the glycemic index of the food by the amount of grams of [carbohydrates](#) available and then divide it by 100.

**Quinoa's glycemic load stands at 13** and there are three ranges for the glycemic load:

- 10 and lower = low
- 11 – 19 = medium
- 20 and higher = high

Now, why is it that we focus so much on the glycemic index and glycemic load?

The reason is that studies have discovered that in the long run, constant spikes of blood sugar increases the rest of type-2 diabetes, and eating food with a low glycemic index such as quinoa helps to prevent this problem allowing you to be and live healthier.

## Quinoa Glycemic Index

Quinoa is becoming popular as a health staple. There are three main types of quinoa which are quite similar and can be used interchangeably when cooking. White quinoa is the most common and has a very mild flavor that makes it suitable in a variety of recipes. Red quinoa has a crunchy texture and stronger flavor and needs a longer cooking time. Black quinoa is very crunchy when cooked and also has the strongest flavor. Quinoa glycemic index is relatively low so this food is much safer alternative for diabetics.

## Quinoa Glycemic Index

A 150g serving of cooked quinoa has received a glycemic index rating of 53 from the Glycemic Index Foundation. This scale defines foods under 10 as having a low glycemic index, 11-19 has a medium glycemic index and 20 and above have a high glycemic index. These ratings are used to help people understand the quality of carbohydrates in this food and how these carbohydrates will impact the blood sugar. However, a glycemic index rating does not necessarily reflect the health value of a food. A cup of cooked quinoa has 25g of

carbohydrates with a glycemic load of 13. The quality of these carbs makes this food a high quality energy source that does not spike blood sugar levels.

The glycemic index rating for quinoa means that it offers more stable energy than items like corn or potatoes. These items break down into sugar very quickly, causing the blood sugar to spike. Foods that have a high glycemic index tend to be very starchy and contain a great deal of sugar that can cause weight gain and diabetes. If consumed regularly, foods with a high glycemic index will cause a constant state of high blood sugar which will lead to insulin resistance that may in turn cause high cholesterol and high blood sugar.