

Persimmon
Diospyros lotus date-plum
Diospyros kaki
Family: Ebenaceae



The persimmon is the edible fruit of a number of species of trees in the genus *Diospyros*. The most widely cultivated of these is the

Oriental persimmon, *Diospyros kaki* – among the most commonly human-grown fruit trees on Earth.

Originally from China, persimmon trees have been grown for thousands of years for their delicious fruit and beautiful wood.

Their orange-colored fruits called persimmons are known for their sweet, honey-like flavor.

While hundreds of types exist, the Hachiya and Fuyu varieties are among the most popular.

The heart-shaped Hachiya persimmons are astringent, meaning they are very high in plant chemicals called tannins that give the unripe fruit a dry, bitter taste.

This type of persimmon needs to be fully ripe before eating.

Fuyu persimmons also contain tannins, but they are considered non-astringent. Unlike Hachiya persimmons, the crisp, tomato-shaped Fuyu variety can be enjoyed even when not completely ripe.

Persimmons can be eaten fresh, dried or cooked and are commonly used around the world in jellies, drinks, pies, curries and puddings.

Not only are persimmons tasty, they're packed with nutrients that can benefit your health in several ways.

Here are 7 benefits of persimmons, including how to incorporate them into your diet.

1. Loaded With Nutrients

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Though small in size, persimmons are packed with an impressive amount of nutrients.

In fact, one persimmon (168 grams) contains:

- **Calories:** 118
- **Carbs:** 31 grams
- **Protein:** 1 gram
- **Fat:** 0.3 grams
- **Fiber:** 6 grams
- **Vitamin A:** 55% of the RDI
- **Vitamin C:** 22% of the RDI

- **Vitamin E:** 6% of the RDI
- **Vitamin K:** 5% of the RDI
- **Vitamin B6 (pyridoxine):** 8% of the RDI
- **Potassium:** 8% of the RDI
- **Copper:** 9% of the RDI
- **Manganese:** 30% of the RDI

Persimmons are also a good source of thiamin (B1), riboflavin (B2), folate, magnesium and phosphorus.

These colorful fruits are low in calories and loaded with fiber, making them a weight loss-friendly food.

Just one persimmon contains over half the recommended intake of vitamin A, a fat-soluble vitamin critical for immune function, vision and fetal development .

Aside from vitamins and minerals, persimmons contain a wide array of plant compounds, including tannins, flavonoids and carotenoids, which can positively impact your health.

The leaves of the persimmon fruit are also high in vitamin C, tannins and fiber, as well as a common ingredient in therapeutic teas .



2. Excellent Source of Powerful Antioxidants

Persimmons contain beneficial plant compounds that have antioxidant qualities.

Antioxidants help prevent or slow cell damage by counteracting oxidative stress, a process triggered by unstable molecules called free radicals.

Oxidative stress has been linked to certain chronic diseases, including heart disease, diabetes, cancer and neurological conditions like Alzheimer's .

Fortunately, consuming antioxidant-rich foods like persimmons can help fight oxidative stress and may decrease the risk of certain chronic diseases.

Diets high in flavonoids, which are powerful antioxidants found in high concentrations in the skin and flesh of persimmons, have been linked to lower rates of heart disease, age-related mental decline and lung cancer .

Persimmons are also rich in carotenoid antioxidants like beta-carotene, a pigment found in many brightly colored fruits and vegetables.

Studies have linked diets high in beta-carotene to a lower risk of heart disease, lung cancer, colorectal cancer and metabolic disease .

Additionally, a study in over 37,000 people found that those with a high dietary intake of beta-carotene had a significantly reduced risk of developing type 2 diabetes .

3. May Benefit Heart Health

Heart disease is the leading cause of death worldwide and negatively impacts the lives of millions of people .

Fortunately, most types of heart disease can be prevented by reducing risk factors, such as an unhealthy diet.

The powerful combination of nutrients found in persimmons makes them an excellent choice for boosting heart health.

Persimmons contain flavonoid antioxidants, including quercetin and kaempferol.

Consuming a diet high in flavonoids has been linked to a reduced risk of heart disease in several studies.

For example, a study in over 98,000 people found those with the highest intake of flavonoids had 18% fewer deaths from heart-related issues, compared to those with the lowest intake .

Diets high in flavonoid-rich foods can support heart health by lowering blood pressure, reducing “bad” LDL cholesterol and decreasing inflammation .

What's more, the tannins that give unripe persimmons their mouth-puckering bitterness may lower blood pressure.

Many animal studies have shown that tannic acid and gallic acid, both found in persimmons, are effective at lowering high blood pressure, a major risk factor for heart disease



4. May Help Reduce Inflammation

Conditions like heart disease, arthritis, diabetes, cancer and obesity are all linked to chronic inflammation.

Luckily, choosing foods that are high in anti-inflammatory compounds can help reduce inflammation and lower disease risk.

Persimmons are an excellent source of the potent antioxidant vitamin C. In fact, one persimmon contains 20% of the recommended daily intake.

Vitamin C helps protect cells from damage caused by free radicals and combats inflammation in the body.

Vitamin C reduces free radical damage by donating an electron to these unstable molecules, thus neutralizing them and preventing them from causing further harm.

C-reactive protein and interleukin-6 are substances produced by the body in reaction to inflammation.

An eight-week study in 64 obese people found that supplementing with 500 mg of vitamin C twice daily significantly reduced levels of C-reactive protein and interleukin-6.

Plus, large studies have linked higher dietary intake of vitamin C to a reduced risk of inflammatory conditions like heart disease, prostate cancer and diabetes .

Persimmons also contain carotenoids, flavonoids and vitamin E, all of which are potent antioxidants that fight inflammation in the body .

5. Rich in Fiber

Having too much cholesterol, especially “bad” LDL cholesterol, can increase the risk of heart disease, stroke and heart attack.

Foods high in soluble fiber, such as fruits and vegetables, can help lower high cholesterol levels by helping the body excrete excess amounts of it.

Persimmons are a high-fiber fruit that has been shown to lower LDL cholesterol levels.

One study found that adults who consumed cookie bars containing persimmon fiber three times a day for 12 weeks experienced a significant decrease in LDL cholesterol, compared to those who ate bars that did not contain persimmon fiber.

Fiber is also important for regular bowel movements and can help reduce high blood sugar levels.

Soluble fiber-rich foods like persimmons slow carbohydrate digestion and sugar absorption, which helps prevent blood sugar spikes.

A study in 117 people with diabetes showed that increased consumption of soluble dietary fiber led to significant improvements in blood sugar levels .

Plus, fiber helps fuel the “good” bacteria in your intestines, which can positively impact your digestive and overall health.

6. Support Healthy Vision

Persimmons provide lots of vitamin A and antioxidants that are critical for eye health.

In fact, one persimmon delivers 55% of the recommended intake of vitamin A.

Vitamin A supports the functioning of the conjunctival membranes and cornea. Moreover, it is an essential component of rhodopsin, a protein necessary for normal vision .

Persimmons also contain lutein and zeaxanthin, which are carotenoid antioxidants that promote healthy vision.

These substances are found in high levels in the retina, a light-sensitive layer of tissue in the back of the eye.

Diets rich in lutein and zeaxanthin may reduce the risk of certain eye diseases, including age-related macular degeneration, a disease that impacts the retina and can cause vision loss .

In fact, a study in over 100,000 people found that those who consumed the highest amounts of lutein and zeaxanthin had a 40% lower risk of developing age-related macular degeneration than those who consumed the least amounts.

7. Delicious and Easy to Add to Your Diet

Persimmons can be added to a variety of dishes to provide an extra boost of nutrition.

These fruits can be enjoyed fresh as a simple snack or used in delicious recipes. In fact, they pair excellently with both sweet and savory foods.

Here are some ways to add persimmons to your diet:

- Slice persimmons onto a salad for a flavorful addition.
- Top your morning yogurt or oatmeal with fresh or cooked persimmon for a burst of natural sweetness.
- Roast persimmons in the oven and drizzle with honey for a tasty and healthy dessert.
- Mix dried or fresh persimmon into muffin, bread or cake mix.
- Combine with berries and citrus fruits for a delicious fruit salad.
- Broil persimmon and serve with baked Brie for a tasty appetizer.
- Bake persimmons with chicken or meat for a unique flavor combination.
- Throw frozen persimmons into your favorite smoothie recipe for extra nutrients.
- Slice and dry persimmons in the oven to make natural fruit strips.

The Bottom Line

Persimmons are sweet, versatile fruits full of vitamins, minerals, fiber and beneficial plant compounds.

What's more, they may promote heart health, reduce inflammation, support healthy vision and keep your digestive system healthy.

Plus, they are tasty and pair well with many foods.

With all the benefits that persimmons have to offer, adding these tasty fruits to your diet should be a no-brainer.



