

The Gel-forming Seeds

Gel-forming fiber is the soluble, *mucilaginous* fiber in some seeds, grains, vegetables and fruits that traps water and creates a clear slippery gel which lubricates the digestive tract, bowel and the joints. This fiber is thirsty for water so it needs to be well hydrated before consuming, or it will become drying and irritating to the G.I. tract.

Soluble fiber is, notably, helpful in the treatment of cardiovascular disease, obesity and diabetes. It is cholesterol lowering. It is filling and creates a physical barrier between carbohydrates and the digestive enzymes that break them down, slowing the conversion of carbs to sugar*. This mucilage also does something very helpful for persons with food allergies and sensitivities. It mechanically buffers the digestive tract from the effects of toxic or irritating food ingredients. It also soothes inflamed tissue.

These recipes feature the following: chia seeds, flaxseeds and psyllium (pronounced *silly-um*) seed husks. While these recipes combine the seeds with liquid for use in fruit meals, you may receive their many benefits** by just combining them with liquid and drinking before one or more meals daily.

Simple Seed Drink

Serves 1

To 1 c. water (or 50/50 water and juice) add one of the following:

1 t. psyllium seed husk powder (or a rounded tsp. of “flakes”)

1 to 1½ tsp. chia seed (whole)

1 to 1½ Tbsp. flaxseed, ground

Stir or shake to combine seeds and water. Drink immediately if psyllium seed drink. Let stand for 10 to 15 minutes if ground flaxseed, and 15 minutes or longer if chia.

Cautions: Do not take supplements or medications with these drinks. Some may prefer to take their fiber in capsules. If so, please be sure to take with 1 or 2 cups of water and drink plenty of water throughout the day.

*Also helpful for endurance athletes for the same reason.

**These seeds also provide insoluble fiber which helps with regularity and normalizes stool consistency.



A clear gel is formed when chia seeds are mixed with water.

Chia Seeds

Chia seeds* (photo above) were recognized by the Aztecs, Mayans and Native Americans of the Southwestern United States as a super food, one that could sustain a warrior or runner for many days or restore health to the sick or dying. They are high in both insoluble and soluble, gel-forming fiber, complete protein, calcium**, iron and B-complex vitamins. Though high in fat, it is over 60% Omega-3 unsaturated fatty acid (alpha-linolenic), making chia seed oil the richest in this anti-inflammatory, immune supportive and heart protective fat.

Unlike flaxseeds and psyllium seeds, which need to be ground to make their nutrients available or palatable, chia seeds need only to be combined with liquid. When prepared in this way chia seeds are more than 90% water and have a tapioca-like texture. Add to cereals, fruits, smoothies, nut butters, mayonnaise, salad dressings, puddings and desserts for the beneficial fiber and to reduce calories, or just stir into water or juice for a healthful beverage.

*Yes, they are the same seeds that are commonly used to grow “Chia Pets”!

**By weight, they contain five times the calcium of milk.