

HEALTH BENEFITS OF PULSES



The importance of a balanced diet

Most countries face nutritional problems, from **undernutrition** and **micronutrient deficiencies** to obesity, leading to **diet-related diseases**.



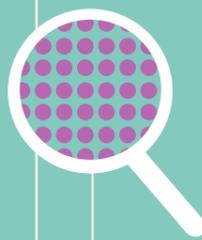
Pulses for a healthy diet

Pulses are rich in **complex carbohydrates, micronutrients, protein** and **B-vitamins**. Therefore, pulses are a **vital part of a healthy diet**.

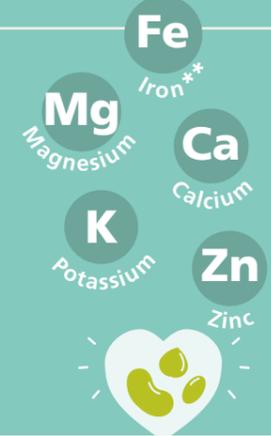


Pulses are easy to prepare, and they can also serve as a **meat alternative**.

PACKED WITH HEALTHY NUTRIENTS



High protein content*
Incredibly rich in their nutritional value, pulses are **small but densely packed with proteins**.



*Combining pulses with animal foods, cereals or nuts results in a better quality protein that contains all essential amino acids in appropriate amounts.

PULSES' HEALTH BENEFITS

Pulses promote a steady, slow-burning energy.

low in calories
(260-360 kcal/100 g dried pulses)

high in complex carbohydrates

high in fibre
(slows digestion and gives a feeling of satiety)

Fe Iron*
Helps **transport oxygen throughout the body**. Lack of iron can lead to fatigue, shortness of breath and dizziness.

Fibre
Binds **toxins and cholesterol in the gut** removing them from the body.

Increases stool volume and transit.

Improved heart health and lower blood cholesterol.

Better overall health and healthy weight control.

WHY ARE PULSES UNDERESTIMATED?

Some common reasons people give are:

Cooking time

The length of time it takes to cook pulses is a lot **longer compared to vegetables**.

'Poor man's food'

They have the stigma of being a 'poor man's food'— **replaced by meat once people can afford it**.

Flatulence

Some carbohydrates found in pulses produce **gas and bloating** for some people.

Presence of anti-nutrients

Raw pulses contain 'anti nutrients' (such as **phytate, tannin** and **phenol**), which can limit the body's absorption of minerals.

SOAKING YOUR PULSES FOR ADDED NUTRITION



Soaking dried pulses for several hours brings them back to life and **activates their enzymes**.

4-8h of soaking for most pulses

Reduces the cooking time and ensures that they can be more **easily digested** and their **nutrients better absorbed** by the body.

Soaking in **ash solutions** will reduce the presence of anti-nutrients more effectively.



**The iron from animal source foods is better used by the body than the iron obtained from pulses. To improve the iron available from pulses, it is advised to combine them with sources of vitamin C, like citrus fruits.



Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations



#IYP2016
fao.org/pulses-2016



C0336e/1/07.16