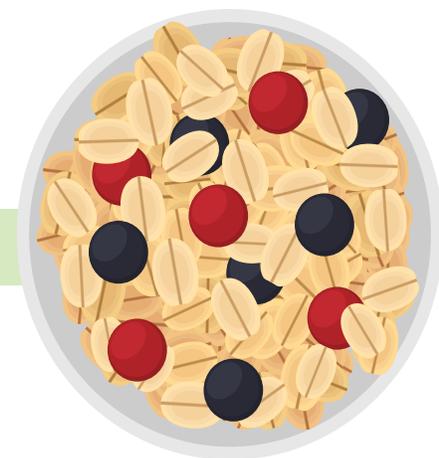
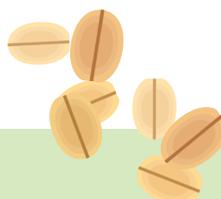


oats

A SIMPLE YET BENEFICIAL FOOD FAVORITE OF CAREGIVERS

Caregivers often need to prepare multiple meals a day for their care recipient. If that's you, and you want to learn about foods that are the right balance of easy to prepare, inexpensive, versatile and nutritious, look no further than the (seemingly) simple oat.

Oats seem like a simple food—small, lightweight grains that are similar in size and plain in color—yet they are quite complex and offer many benefits.



TOP REASONS FOR USING OATS

Let's start with the practical reasons for utilizing oats in your loved one's diet.

INEXPENSIVE & SHELF-STABLE

Large packages of oats come in 42-ounce containers that make 30 servings, all for just a few dollars. Don't be concerned that this may be too many servings to buy at one time. Dry oats need no refrigeration and have a long shelf-life, up to two years in the pantry. This makes oats a valuable staple to keep on hand.

SOFT TEXTURE

When cooked, oats have a very soft texture that can make chewing and swallowing easier for your loved one. Different types of oats produce different consistencies when cooked, so look for one that meets your loved one's needs and preferences.

Steel-cut oats have the coarsest texture, while instant oats have the finest and softest texture. Rolled (sometimes called old-fashioned) oats fall between these two textures; they are soft, but the oats still have bite to them.

QUICK TO PREPARE

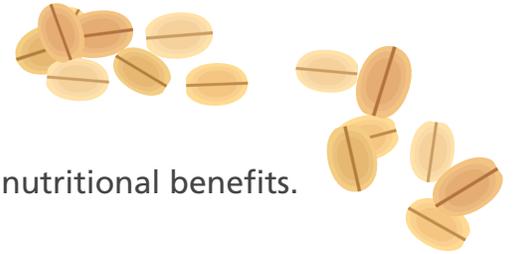
Time is precious when caring for your loved one, so when a food can be cooked quickly and offers many nutrients, it's a win-win situation! Making oatmeal can take as little as one minute in the microwave using instant oats.

VERSATILE

Think oats can be used only to make oatmeal? There actually are many ways to incorporate oats in your loved one's diet. Oatmeal also can be added to yogurt, muffins, pancakes, breakfast "cookies," granola bars, or even to bread crust!



WHY OATS ARE A HEALTHY FOOD CHOICE



Besides these practical considerations, oats also have many nutritional benefits.

1 Nutrient-dense

Oats are packed with vitamins and minerals that are essential to body functions. As little as a 1/2 cup serving is a good source of phosphorus, Vitamin B1, magnesium, copper, iron and zinc. Other essential nutrients present include folate, calcium, potassium, and vitamins B5, B6 and B3. Each of these nutrients helps the body function properly in unique ways.

2 High in soluble & insoluble fiber

Oats contain high amounts of both soluble and insoluble fiber. There are 4 grams of fiber per 1/2 cup serving. To put that in perspective, the recommended daily value for fiber is 25 grams for women and 38 grams for men.

Let's look at the different types of fiber and their importance to body functions.

Soluble fiber: Oats contain beta-glucan, which binds with water to make a gel-like substance. This gel increases the amount of time it takes for oats to leave the stomach and absorb glucose in the bloodstream, which helps keep blood sugar from spiking quickly after meals and also keeps the stomach feeling fuller longer.

Insoluble fiber: This fiber helps with bowel movement regularity, which can be a challenge if your loved one isn't getting enough fiber in his or her diet. Insoluble fiber does not bind with water, but instead attracts water to the stool to ease bowel movements.

Both types of fiber—soluble and insoluble—are necessary to positively affect digestion, absorption and excretion of foods.

3 May lower cholesterol

Beta-glucan (soluble fiber) also may aid in reducing the amount of cholesterol in the body. As beta-glucan moves through the digestive tract, the gel-like substance can pick up cholesterol and help move it out of the body.

4 May lower blood pressure

Oats are high in antioxidants, especially avenanthramides. Don't let the name scare you—this important antioxidant can help increase the production of nitric oxide, which improves blood flow by keeping blood vessels open and clear.

Oats are a simple food, but they offer plentiful health benefits. Consider adding oats to your loved one's diet today.