

Functional Benefits

Oats are a powerhouse of nutrition and one of the most versatile foods – from heart health to digestive health to energy, this powerful grain has a lot to offer. Oats provide fiber and other nutrients that can help to support a healthy lifestyle:

Digestive Health

Maintaining digestive health is important to keep us feeling our best. Fiber from a diet rich in grains, fruits, and vegetables helps keep things moving through the digestive tract. As a good source of fiber, oats are a great place to start. A ½ cup serving of Quaker Old Fashioned Oats provides 4 grams of fiber. Experts recommend eating at least 25–30 grams of fiber a day from a variety of grains, fruits, and vegetables (examples in the table below) to help support a healthy digestive system. ⁽¹⁾

Food/Serving	Dietary Fiber (g)
Black Beans - 1/2 cup	7.5
Pear - 1 medium	5.5
Avocado - 1/2 cup	5.0
Apple - 1 medium	4.4
Old Fashioned Oats - 1/2 cup	4.0
Raspberries - 1/2 cup	4.0
Peas - 1/2 cup	4.0
Prunes - 1/2 cup	3.8

Heart Health

Our hearts pump blood, which carries oxygen and nutrients our bodies need to function. More and more, we are seeing evidence of the important role food can play in supporting a healthy heart. A heart-healthy diet is similar to an overall healthy dietary pattern containing: whole grains, a variety of fruits and vegetables, low-fat dairy foods, lean poultry and fish, nuts and legumes, and non-tropical vegetable oils, while limiting saturated and trans fats, sodium, and red meat. ⁽²⁾

Whole grains – and in particular oats – have been repeatedly shown to help promote heart health. There is a solid body of evidence for oats' role in lowering blood cholesterol, a risk factor for heart disease, thanks to the power of the soluble fiber called beta-glucan. At least three grams of this beneficial fiber are needed daily for this effect, and one bowl of Old Fashioned Quaker oatmeal provides two of those grams. Mix oats into smoothies or incorporate into recipes throughout the day to increase the amount of soluble fiber in your diet to get 3 grams.

A healthy diet isn't the only factor to consider when concerns related to heart health arise. Everyone should know their cholesterol and blood pressure numbers and consult a health professional for advice on managing cholesterol and heart health.

Energy

People need energy to fuel their active lifestyles and busy schedules. In the classic sense, energy comes from the foods we eat. However, many additional lifestyle factors can influence how energized one feels, including sleep and exercise.

Foods that deliver quality nutrition and provide energy are an important component. However, confusion about carbs has led many to walk away from the very foods that provide those benefits. People often cut oats from their diets because they are trying to reduce carbohydrate intake, not realizing that cooked oats are a whole grain and complex carbohydrate with a multitude of nutritional and energy benefits.

1. Food and Nutrition Board, Institute of Medicine of the National Academies. (2002) *Dietary Reference Intakes for Energy, Carbohydrate, Fiber, Fat, Fatty Acids, Cholesterol, Protein, and Amino Acids (Macronutrients)*. Washington, D.C.: The National Academies Press.

2. The American Heart Association. (2017). The American Heart Association's Diet and Lifestyle Recommendations. Retrieved from: <https://www.heart.org/en/healthy-living/healthy-eating/eat-smart/nutrition-basics/aha-diet-and-lifestyle-recommendations>.