



Pumpkins

Sure, pumpkins can seem spooky in their Jack-o-lantern state, but don't be fooled— they're actually one of the most nutritious fruits out there. Loaded with antioxidants and disease-fighting vitamins, these gourds aren't just for carving, making them a bonafide Greatist superfood.

Pump Up the Pumpkin—Why They're Super

Pumpkins' bright orange color may make them a good substitute for traffic cones, but the real power behind their hue is beta-carotene, a provitamin that is converted to vitamin A in the body. Known for its immune-boosting powers, beta-carotene is essential for eye health and has also been linked to preventing coronary heart disease . But there's no need to choose fresh to get the benefits of pumpkin. **One cup of canned pumpkin has seven grams of fiber and three grams of protein— even more than the fresh stuff— and contains only 80 calories and one gram of fat.** Plus, canned pumpkin is packed with vitamins and provides over 50 percent of the daily value of vitamin K, which may reduce the risk for some types of cancer . **Still, the real treasure is in the seeds.** One ounce (about 140 seeds) is packed with protein, magnesium, potassium, and zinc. Studies suggest pumpkin seeds provide a number of health benefits— such as blocking the enlargement of the prostate gland, lowering the risk of bladder stones, and helping to prevent depression . Plus, they contain high levels of phytosterols, which research suggests can reduce cholesterol and even help prevent some types of cancers . So get scooping!