

Grapes are highly nutritious, sweet as candy, and have been essential to the good life since the dawn of civilization. Served in fresh bunches, in dried snack-friendly nuggets, or with their essence squeezed and fermented into intoxicating elixirs, grapes take on various forms to satisfy our appetites.

Grapes are high in antioxidants, [vitamin C](#), and potassium, to name just a few of the nutrients they hold within them. This means they could have numerous health benefits, such as boosting heart health, and lowering the risk of [type 2 diabetes](#).

Read on to learn more about the health benefits of grapes, a detailed breakdown of their nutritional content, and more.

What Are Grapes?

Grape plants have been with us so long that fossilized leaves, stems, and seeds have been found in Northern Hemisphere deposits from as early as 65 million years ago.

The grape plant is made up of fruit-bearing vines from the *Vitis* genus of the Vitaceae family. Their colorful, globe-like, juicy, sugary [berries](#) are what we call grapes, whether they come in blue, purple, red, pink, green, or amber.

[1]

Grape cultivation began as early as 6500 B.C. Propelled by winemaking — the fermentation of grape juice into an alcoholic beverage — by 4000 B.C., cultivation had spread from eastern Europe and western Asia into the Nile delta region, after which the practice moved westward into Europe and eastward into China.

[2]

Grape wine was so important to the ancient Greeks and Romans that they worshipped a god of wine and pleasure, whom they called Dionysus and Bacchus, respectively.

[3]

After the fall of the Roman Empire, the role of wine in the Christian Mass helped grape cultivation flourish in Europe. The practice crossed the Atlantic with the European colonization of the Americas.

[4]

Today, Italy, France, and the United States are the world's top producers of grapes.

[5]

Grape Nutrition Facts

Grapes are an excellent source of vitamins, potassium and fiber. According to the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), these are the nutrition facts for 100 grams (g) of red or green European grapes.

Potential Health Benefits of Grapes

The fruit, seeds, skins, and leaves of grape plants (*Vitis vinifera*) are purported to have many health benefits — some supported by research, and many more for which there is insufficient evidence, according to the Natural Medicines Comprehensive Database (NMCD).

[6]

Here are some the supposed health benefits for which the NMCD says there is evidence that grape products are possibly ineffective for:

- Hay fever
- Nausea and vomiting caused by [chemotherapy](#)
- [Breast pain](#)
- Overactive bladder
- Weight loss

Nonetheless, according to the NMCD, grape seed and grape leaf extracts are possibly effective for addressing symptoms of poor blood flow in the legs, such as chronic venous insufficiency.

A deeper dive into additional health claims that the NMCD cites reveals the following.

Improve Immune Health

Grapes are nutrition powerhouses. They are packed with [vitamin C](#), a powerful antioxidant that plays key roles in immune system health, connective tissue development, and wound healing.

[7]

[8]

Grapes also impact gut bacteria which further boosts immune health.

Improve Bone Health

Grapes are a great source of [vitamin K](#), which helps with blood clotting and maintaining healthy bones.

[9]

[10]

Protection Against Oxidative Stress

Grapes are also rich in antioxidants, which help protect the body's cells against oxidative stress, a mechanism linked to cancer, heart disease, and [Alzheimer's disease](#). In particular, certain types of grape, such as pearl black grapes and summer black grapes are especially high in antioxidants.

[11]

Improve Kidney Function

Grapes are really high in [potassium](#), which is important for kidney function.

[9]

[10]

Low potassium levels are also a concern across America, as it's a nutrient that people generally aren't getting enough of. Boost your potassium levels with some grapes.

Lower Blood Pressure and Boost Heart Health

A 2019 review of 15 studies involving 825 participants suggested that grape seed extract might help lower levels of [LDL cholesterol](#), total cholesterol, [triglycerides](#), and the inflammatory marker C-reactive protein. The individual studies, however, were small in size, which could affect the interpretation of the results.

[12]

Another study from 2022 also found that many of the bioactive compounds in grapes could mean they are good for lowering blood pressure. Some of these compounds may lower the amount of molecules that cause vasoconstriction, which is when the blood vessels tighten, and can lead to higher blood pressure. Researchers note, however, that more studies are needed to draw conclusions.

[7]

Researchers also note that neither of these studies involved whole grapes, but used grape extract.

Lower the Risk of Type 2 Diabetes

Blueberries, darker grapes, and apples are all rich in the pigment anthocyanin, a flavonoid with antioxidant properties. Additionally, grapes have a medium [glycemic load](#) (a measure of food's ability to raise blood glucose) of 11 per serving.

[13]

[14]

Eaten in moderation, they can be part of a healthy diet and help with blood sugar control.

Can Grapes Help With Weight Loss?

While grapes don't actually affect any physiological mechanisms that could promote weight loss directly, swapping unhealthy sweet treats like cookies and candy for fruits like grapes, is an excellent way to help manage your weight.

As sweet-tasting as grapes are, 10 of them contain only 34 calories and 9 g of carbohydrates — 2 and 3 percent, respectively, of your daily value based on a diet of 2,000 calories and 300 g of carbs per day. So to that end, they make a great, fiber-rich substitute for junk-food snacks or sugary drinks.

[15]

How to Select and Store Grapes

Here's how to select and store your grapes, to ensure you are getting the best out of this tiny nutritious fruit.

Selection

When selecting grapes at the store or farmer's market, look for bunches that have green, pliable stems and plump, firm berries.

Don't worry if they have a white, powdery coating on them. That's "bloom," which offers natural protection against decay. But if they are soft, puckered, or brown in appearance, they are probably heading toward rot or raisin territory.

[16]

Storage

Store unwashed grapes dry in the refrigerator and then rinse them thoroughly before eating them. They'll keep on your counter about three to five days, in the refrigerator 5 to 10 days, and in the freezer three to five months.

[16]

[17]

Freezing them brings out the sweetness, and they make a great frozen snack for a hot summer day, or a healthy alternative to juice pops for children and adults alike (cut them in half for those ages 5 and under).

How to Eat Grapes

Grapes are versatile! They make great wine, juices, vinegars, jellies, jams, and raisins. Their leaves make great wraps for rice and other tasty fillings. You can:

- Use your oven to dry grapes into raisins.
- Make your own muscadine wine.
- Cook up and can a batch of Concord jelly.
- Better yet, turn wine to vinegar and liven your salads.
- And don't forget to preserve the grape leaves!