

Excellent Benefits of Eating Dates

The Prophet Muhammad ﷺ said:

“A house in which dates are not consumed is a house with hungry inhabitants” (*Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*).

بَيْتٌ لَا تَمْرَ فِيهِ جِيَاعٌ أَهْلُهُ

“Whosoever consumes seven dates in the morning, poison nor magic will harm them” (*Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*).

مَنْ تَصَبَّحَ بِسَبْعِ تَمْرَاتٍ لَمْ يَضُرَّهُ
سُومٌ وَلَا سِحْرٌ

Are dates special?

Yes they are, not least because Allāh mentions dates in the Qur’ān:

And tall date palms, with ranged clusters (50:10).

وَالنَّخْلَ بَاسِقَاتٍ لَهَا طَلْعٌ نَضِيدٌ

And green crops (fields) and date palms with soft spadix (26:148).

وَزُرُوعٍ وَنَخْلٍ طَلْعُهَا هَضِيمٌ

In them (both) will be fruits and date palms and pomegranates (55:68).

فِيهَا فَاكِهَةٌ وَنَخْلٌ وَرَمَانٌ

As we well know, dates were a favourite food of the Prophet ﷺ too, in particular *Ajwa*.

What do dates contain?

Dates are extremely healthy. They contain many excellent ingredients. In short in 100 grams of dates, you will find:

Carbohydrate	75grams	Phosphorus	72mg
Water	20 grams	Calcium	65mg
Fibre	2.4 grams	Iron	2.2mg
Protein	2.2 grams	Vitamin B1	0.08mg
Fats	0.6 grams	Vitamin B2	0.05mg
		Vitamin A	60 IU

Dates are also rich in glucose, potassium and magnesium.

What are the health benefits of dates?

- They are low in fat.
- They contain magnesium, they act as a cure to many diseases, including some forms of cancer.
- They contain calcium, they are good for the bones and teeth. In a study by Dr. Raf'at Hussain, the amount of fluorine in dates was found to be found four times greater than any other fruit. Fluorine is very important in stopping tooth decay.
- Dates strengthen the eyesight because they contain vitamin A.
- Fresh dates are excellent for mothers during childbirth. The fruit of the date-palm contains a substance that causes the uterus to contract and strengthen the uterine muscles, thus helping in birth. It also reduces the amount of bleeding after childbirth. Allāh mentions this regarding the pregnancy of Maryam in the Qur'ān:

*And shake the date-palm
towards you, it will let fall
fresh ripe-dates upon you
(19:25).*

و هزي اليك بجذع النخلة
تساقط عليك رطبا جنيا

Why Ramadan?

Deliberately, the Prophet ﷺ instructed Muslims to break their fasts with dates. Why?

- a. It is at the end of the fast that the glucose level is at the lowest. Dates are brilliant at getting glucose to the body quickly and harmlessly. Fatty food takes time to digest and so it does not make you feel better straight away after the fast. Dates are much quicker.
- b. When you eat dates at the end of the fast, it enters into the cells of the liver first, then the cells of the brain, blood, nervous system, muscles and then all the other tissues. It helps to preserve the proteins of the body.
- c. In addition to glucose, dates are a brilliant source of potassium. At the end of a fast, we are dehydrated and tired. *Iftār* is the time when Muslims need to hydrate themselves. Because they contain potassium (64% more than a banana), the body hydrates much quicker.
- d. Dates also contain fibre. This is good food to keep the bowels healthy. Dates are a good remedy for constipation if they are eaten in the morning on an empty stomach.
- e. Dates also have a calming influence on the body. It is good for the brain and thought.

In Short...

- Dates palm trees can survive in extreme conditions, places where there is little water.
- Dates can be preserved all year round, with no need for special treatment for preservation.
- It is delicious food.
- It has excellent health benefits.
- It is cheap.

- Most importantly, it is a highly-prized sunna of the Prophet , which therefore earns us a reward every time we eat them.

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