



10th November 2016

EVERY FIVE MINUTES ONE AUSTRALIAN DEVELOPS DIABETES

HELP MANAGE DIABETES – KEEP AN EYE OUT FOR LEGUMES

- **280 Australians develop diabetes every day, that's one every 5 minutes¹.**
- **Legumes can help manage blood glucose control to a similar extent as medication².**
- **World Diabetes Day on 14th November raises awareness of the condition, promoting ways to help prevent and manage diabetes.**

280 Australians develop diabetes every day, that's one every 5 minutes.¹ Worryingly, many of these people aren't aware they even have diabetes or aren't managing their condition, which puts them at significant risk of complications such as loss of eyesight, heart disease and kidney failure.

But whether you have diabetes or are at risk of developing the condition, the key to preventing long-term complications is to control your blood glucose so it falls within a healthy range. Up to 70% of type 2 diabetes cases can be prevented or delayed by adopting a healthier lifestyle¹, proof that a varied and balanced diet can help, especially when you include the humble legume - a food most of us don't eat often enough.

You probably know that legumes, or more specifically beans, are good for your heart. But did you know they can also help manage diabetes?

A scientific review of 41 research trials found that people who ate legumes, especially as part of a high fibre or low GI diet, improved their long-term blood glucose control to a similar extent as those on a course of medication intended for this purpose.²

And there's never been a better time to start adding legumes to your diet than on World Diabetes Day. Held every year on 14th November, this year's World Diabetes Day theme is 'Eyes on Diabetes,' with a focus on promoting the importance of screening to ensure early diagnosis of type 2 diabetes and appropriate treatment to reduce the risk of complications.

Simply adding $\frac{3}{4}$ of a cup of beans, peas or lentils to your meal can help reduce your blood glucose response. And doing this just five times a week results in consistent improvements in blood glucose control.³

Rebecca Williams, Accredited Practising Dietitian and Nutrition Manager of the Grains & Legumes Nutrition Council (GLNC) says "Legumes work to help manage blood glucose control because they are a low GI, high fibre food. They contain soluble fibre which naturally slows digestion, as well as resistant starch which is absorbed slowly. Their high fibre content works to reduce the spike in blood glucose after a meal, helping to manage diabetes."

Although an often overlooked food group, the mighty legume has other benefits to offer. A more recent review has shown that legumes can help manage weight - a key risk factor for diabetes.⁴ And regular consumption of legumes can also help to reduce cholesterol, great news for people with diabetes who are at higher risk of heart disease.⁵

Ms Williams says *“Emerging research is consistently showing the true value of legumes and their many health benefits when eaten as part of a balanced diet. So add some extra flavour to your meals and benefit from better blood glucose control by simply adding a serve of beans, peas or lentils to your everyday cooking.”*

With so many to choose from, you’re spoilt for choice - from chickpeas to split peas and kidney beans to lentils. Or mix it up with the little-known Australian lupin!

For optimum health benefits, try incorporating half a cup of legumes into your diet each day - mix cooked lentils into a green salad or add a handful of beans to an omelette. Or start slowly by adding them to your cooking just once a week, try mixing dried red lentils in to your bolognese sauce or mash up half a can of white beans and add to mashed potatoes for a super creamy mash. However you like to eat them, start enjoying the health benefits of legumes today.

For more recipe ideas visit the GLNC website at www.glnc.org.au.

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For more information

Visit the [GLNC Website](http://www.glnc.org.au) for more recipes, factsheets and information on the nutrition and health benefits of legumes.

Recipes

[Spaghetti Bolognese with Red Lentils](#)

[5 Minute Faba Bean Salad](#)

References

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