**Chickpeas**

1. What is a Chickpea?
   1. The chickpea is a legume.
   2. Chickpeas are known by many different names all over the world. Other names include garbanzo beans (the most popular term in the US), bengal grams, egyptian peas, ceci beans and kabuli chana.
      1. The name chick pea comes from French, the name garbanzo comes from modern Spanish
   3. Chickpeas come in a variety of different types and colors, not just the beige variety we are used to seeing in cans. Chickpeas can also be black, green, red and brown.
   4. Over 12 million tons of chickpeas are grown worldwide annually. India is the largest producer worldwide, producing 64% of the world’s supply.
   5. Most garbanzo beans found in the grocery store (especially canned garbanzos) are cream-colored and relatively round. This type of garbanzo bean is called the "kabuli-type." Worldwide, there's a far more common type of garbanzo bean called the "desi-type." This second type of garbanzo bean is about half the size of cream-colored type we're accustomed to seeing in the grocery, and it's more irregular in shape. The color is also different—varying from light tan to black to green and red.
2. Bean Around For Thousands of Years
3. Chickpeas are some of the longest cultivated plants on earth. There is strong evidence that chickpeas were first cultivated in the Middle East a staggering 7500 years BC, making it one of the oldest known foods to man.
4. The popularity of the chickpea quickly spread all over the world, and they were soon grown and consumed in many ancient civilisations such as Egypt, Greece and Rome. They are a staple in many cultures around the world. Several varieties are cultivated throughout the world.
5. Ancient people associated chickpeas with medicinal purposes.
6. In 1793, ground-roasted chickpeas were noted by a German writer as a substitute for coffee in Europe.
7. Chickpeas are thought to have originated in southeast Turkey.
8. So Nutritious
9. Like other legumes such as beans, peas and lentils, chickpeas are high in fiber, protein, iron, and folate.
10. Chickpeas are a great source of both soluble and dietary fiber, important for maintaining a healthy digestive system. Soluble fiber may assist with reducing the absorption of cholesterol into the bloodstream and helps maintain blood sugar levels, which may help to reduce the risk of developing heart disease and also aid in managing diabetes. The dietary fiber in chickpeas and their low glycemic index (GI) may also assist with weight loss by making you feel fuller for longer.
11. Chickpeas contain a huge number of antioxidants, vitamins and minerals including folate, magnesium, vitamin b6, vitamin c, iron, potassium, calcium, phosphorus and zinc.
12. They are also high in protein so are a fantastic alternative to meat for vegetarians.
13. They are featured extensively in the [Mediterranean diet](https://www.medicalnewstoday.com/articles/149090.php) and Middle-Eastern food.
14. Cooking with Chickpeas
    1. Chickpeas are an incredibly versatile ingredient to cook with. You can eat them canned, dried or roasted, hot or cold and they are inexpensive. Chickpeas can be used for making much, much more than just good old hummus.
    2. Chickpeas are available all year and are often found in grocery stores either dried and packaged or canned. They have a nutty flavor and buttery texture that allows them to be easily incorporated into any meal.
    3. Dried chickpeas are usually rapidly boiled for 10 minutes and then simmered for a long period, up to 1-2 hours. If soaked for 12-24 hrs before, it can cut the cooking time down by 30 minutes.
    4. Most people purchase canned chickpeas; these can be rinsed and eaten cooked or cold.
15. Typical uses for Chickpeas:
    1. Cold in salads
    2. Cooked in stews
    3. Ground into flour
    4. Ground and shaped in balls and fried as “falafel”
    5. Pureed and made into hummus (Arabic word for chickpeas)
    6. Roasted, spiced and eaten as a snack
    7. Some varieties can be popped and eaten like popcorn
    8. In the Philippines, they are preserved in syrup and eaten as sweets or desserts
    9. A chickpea-derived liquid can be used as an egg white replacement to make meringue.
    10. Toss chickpeas and a variety of other legumes with any vinaigrette for an easy protein-packed bean salad. Add some rice to make it a complete protein.
    11. Sprinkle some canned or packaged roasted chickpeas over a salad to add a nutty flavor and to broaden the variety of textures.
    12. Chickpea flour can add fiber, protein, and an assortment of vitamins and minerals to gluten-free baking.
    13. Add chickpeas to vegetable soup to increase its nutritional content.
16. Chickpea Fun Facts
    1. In many parts of the world, people consume chickpea plant leaves.
    2. Ground chickpeas have been used as a coffee substitute since the 18th century and are still commonly used as a caffeine-free alternative today. Widely available, the taste is said to be delicious – why not give it a go!
    3. Chickpeas are an agricultural wonder. Not only do chickpeas produce a valuable crop but at the same time they also provide a natural organic method of breaking the disease cycle in wheat and barley crops. This means less fungicide and less insecticide, resulting in a cleaner, greener environment.
    4. Reminder: As you add more legumes to your diet, be sure to drink enough water to help your body handle the increase in fiber!!