

# Health Benefits of Grapefruit



Grapefruit is a tropical citrus fruit mainly grown in southern regions like Florida and California. It is one of the lowest-calorie fruits with a low glycemic index since its flavor can range from sweet to sour, depending on the variety. It is available in dark red, ruby red and white flesh.

Grapefruit is an excellent source of antioxidants and fiber which help to fend off infection, free radicals, chronic disease and obesity.

## WHAT MAKES GRAPEFRUIT GREAT?

### **Nutrition**

1/2 grapefruit provides 52 Calories, 1 gm protein, 2 gm fiber, no fat and no cholesterol.

### **Vitamins**

Grapefruit contains high amounts antioxidants vitamin C and beta-carotene (particularly in pink varieties) which help boost immunity and neutralize free radicals.

Beta-carotene is converted to vitamin A which helps prevent eye-related diseases like macular degeneration. Grapefruit also contain B vitamins folate and thiamine.

### **Minerals**

Potassium is the main mineral in grapefruit. Along with magnesium, these minerals work to lower blood pressure and maintain normal heart rhythm. Magnesium also helps regulate blood glucose and contributes to nerve impulse conduction and bone health.

### **Phytonutrients**

Lycopene, found in pink and red varieties, is known to protect against prostate cancer, and may help slow the growth of tumors associated with other types of cancer.

Grapefruit are rich in flavonoids including four types: flavanones, flavones, flavonols and anthocyanidins which have been shown to lower risk for major chronic diseases. These antioxidant compounds contribute to the flavor and color of the fruit and seek out and destroy free radicals associated with inflammation, stroke, heart disease, vision disorders, cancer and bone loss.

Naringin is the main flavonoid in grapefruit. It has been found to act as a free radical scavenger, lower cholesterol, reduce radiation-induced chromosome damage in bone marrow, and stimulate DNA repair in prostate cancer cells.

Citric acid in grapefruit may be effective in reducing risk for developing kidney stones, particularly the formation of calcium oxalate stones, the most common type.

### **Fiber**

Fiber in grapefruit help reduce inflammation, lower cholesterol, and contributes to feelings of fullness important for weight management. Fiber also acts as food for our healthy gut bacteria who consume fiber and convert it to healthy compounds like short-chain-fatty-acids, which boost immunity and brain health.

## BUYING & USING GRAPEFRUIT

When buying grapefruit, consider that the rind color is not always an indicator of interior flesh color. Look for labels that specify red or ruby grapefruit varieties when seeking sweeter fruit. The heavier fruits tend to be juicier and skin will have a slight give. Grapefruit should have a pleasant aroma when ripe.

Most grapefruit are consumed raw. Wash fruit. Slice in half and cut along segments and remove with a spoon. Or peel whole grapefruit like you would an orange, and eat the segments. Toss on salads, in breakfast cereal or smoothies.

Grapefruit juice may be convenient but removing the fiber will drive up blood glucose. Whole fruit is recommended.



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[https://extension.oregonstate.edu/coos/  
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## WARNING

Grapefruit may block the enzyme necessary for the breakdown of certain medications. This could increase plasma concentrations of the drug, and potentially cause overdose or other adverse effects.

See your doctor if you are taking blood pressure, cholesterol (statins), allergy or immunosuppressant medications that may be affected by grapefruit consumption.

### Broiled Grapefruit

Adapted from [Simple-veganista.com](http://Simple-veganista.com)

#### Ingredients:

2 grapefruit  
4 tsp coconut sugar, or maple syrup  
4 tsp coconut oil or margarine (opt)  
1 tsp grated fresh ginger (or ground)  
Opt: shredded coconut, cinnamon

#### Instructions:

1. Preheat broiler. Cut grapefruits in half. Slice a small piece off the bottom off each so they rest flat on baking sheet.
2. Using a grapefruit or paring knife, cut between each segment and around the outside, to separate flesh from rind.
3. Place each half on rimmed cookie sheet or baking dish. Top with 1 teaspoon each of sugar and coconut oil and a hefty pinch of ginger and spread evenly.
4. Place pan under broiler and cook from 4-7 minutes, checking often to see that sugar has caramelized and rind is beginning to brown.
5. If using coconut, sprinkle after 2 minutes to avoid burning.
6. Serve warm or room temperature.

### Grapefruit Cake

[Shortgirtallorder.com](http://Shortgirtallorder.com)

#### Cake Ingredients:

3/4 cup unsweetened almond milk	2 tsp grapefruit zest
3/4 cup granulated sugar	2 cups + 2 Tbsp pastry flour
1/2 cup freshly squeezed grapefruit juice	1 tsp salt
1/2 cup olive oil	1 tsp baking soda
2 tsp vanilla	1/4 cup baking powder

#### Glaze ingredients:

1/2 cup powdered sugar 1 Tbsp grapefruit juice 1 tsp grapefruit zest

#### Instructions:

1. Preheat oven to 350°F. Lightly grease an 8-9" springform pan and set aside.
2. In a large bowl, whisk together almond milk, sugar, juice, oil, vanilla and zest.
3. In a separate bowl, sift pastry flour, baking soda and powder, and salt. Slowly add dry ingredients to bowl of wet ingredients and mix until batter is smooth.
4. Add batter to pan and gently tap to release air bubbles.
5. Bake 45-60 minutes or until toothpick inserted in the middle comes out clean.
6. Allow cake to cool to room temperature before adding glaze.
7. Whisk glaze ingredients and pour over cooled cake. Decorate with grapefruit slices or wedges.
8. No time to make the glaze? Just sprinkle with a light dusting of confectionary sugar.

### Grapefruit Breakfast Quinoa

[Wintersweetz.com](http://Wintersweetz.com)

#### Ingredients:

2 red grapefruit, segmented	1 cup fresh or frozen blueberries
3/4 cup fresh red grapefruit juice	2 Tbsp maple syrup or honey
3/4 cup quinoa, rinsed	1/2 cup water
	Opt: 1 cup unsweetened yogurt

#### Instructions:

1. In a saucepan, bring quinoa, juice, water and honey to boil.
2. Cover and simmer about 15 minutes or until quinoa has absorbed all the liquid. Stir in blueberries and grapefruit segments.
3. Serve with dollop of yogurt if desired.

## REFERENCES

FDA.gov

[Hopkinsmedicine.org](http://Hopkinsmedicine.org)

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