

TAHINI DIP & HOLIDAY HALVA!

Marlenea La Shomb • Emigrant, MT



TAHINI VEGGIE DIP

Lemon-Tahini Recipe for Dips, Sauces, or Salad Dressing • Oil Free!

Dunk your veggies in this awesomeness, drizzle it in your wraps, or pour it on your salad! Add extra water at the end until you reach desired consistency. Add the water 1 tbsps at a time. Can take an extra 1/2 cup to get it right. Blend all ingredients until smooth—and enjoy! (Keep leftovers for up to 7 days.)

- ◆ 1–2 T. lemon juice
- ◆ 1/2 cup water (see liquid options)
- ◆ 1 clove garlic
- ◆ 1/4 cup tahini
- ◆ 1 dash cayenne

Options:

- Liquids (be creative!): Olive juice (green/ black), cilantro/ lime juice, mustard w/ pickle juice, sauerkraut juice, ume vinegar, garbanzo bean juice, steamed-veggie juice.
- 1 t. pink Himalayan sea salt • 1 t. onion powder
- Lemon juice w/ dill, basil/oregano, turmeric, lemon balm.
- Blend mustard with maple syrup or honey



5 SURPRISING BENEFITS OF TAHINI

Tahini is a superstar in hummus, but that's not its only claim to fame. It's also a veritable superfood. Learn the secret behind tahini's numerous health benefits.



Tahini, made from toasted, ground sesame seeds, is a rich source of unsaturated fatty acids, antioxidant lignans, vitamins and minerals. Its rich, earthy and slightly nutty flavor is a mainstay in traditional hummus recipes, but both tahini and the sesame seeds from which it's made have been enjoyed for hundreds of years.

Tahini is so versatile it can be mixed with lemon juice and salt and used as a dip for raw veggies. You can blend it with olive oil and apple cider vinegar to make a tasty salad dressing. [See oil-free recipe at left.]

Or use it to make Tarator—a sauce that contains tahini, garlic, lemon juice and parsley that's especially good with poultry and vegetables. You can feel great about enjoying tahini morning, noon and night, as it's not only delicious—it's incredibly good for you!

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COCONUT/TAHINI HALVA!

*Vegan • Gluten-Free
Grain-Free • Dairy-Free*

Take your ingredients and throw them in the blender. Then pour them in a pan and chill. Can't get much easier than that! I love that it keeps things on the raw side, since I usually make my tahini with sesame seeds.

- ◆ 2 T. coconut oil (melted)
- ◆ 1/8–1/4 c. liquid sweetener of your choice (I use maple syrup.)
- ◆ 1/2 c. seeds (raw or toasted) or 1/4 c. Tahini
- ◆ 1/2–3/4 c. unsweetened, shredded coconut
- ◆ 1–3 t. vanilla extract (or to taste)

1. Place all ingredients in a high-powered blender or food processor and blend until smooth, scraping down sides as necessary.
2. Pour into a glass pan lined with parchment paper and smooth.
3. Freeze until solid (30–60 min.), then cut into squares & enjoy!
4. Store in the fridge or freezer. ■



Tahini and the sesame seeds that it's made from have more than 70 pharmacological actions, including antioxidant, pain-relieving and anti-inflammatory effects. Here's just a sampling of why tahini and sesame seeds are so good for you.

1) Lowers Blood Pressure & Improves Endothelial Function

Sesame seeds are known to have antihypertensive, lipid-lowering and appetite-controlling properties that may benefit heart health. In a study of 20 men, eating just 50 grams of tahini—about 3.5 tablespoons—led to a significant decrease in diastolic blood pressure and pulse rate four hours later. Endothelial function, a “key regulator of vascular homeostasis,” also improved.

Previous research found that men with high blood pressure who consumed sesame oil with a meal daily for 60 days had significant improvement in the flow-mediated dilatation, a measure of endothelial function, after sesame oil consumption.

2) Relieves Pain & Bruising

Tahini contains a wealth of nutrients, including calcium, iron, potassium, phosphorus, antioxidants and vitamins B, C and E. It's also composed of more than 50% sesame oil, which has anti-inflammatory, antiviral, antifungal and antibacterial effects. The antioxidants in sesame oil are beneficial for the skin.

“Actually, the natural antioxidants have the intrinsic capabilities to prevent lipid peroxidation, which is suggested to be closely related to aging, cell mutation,

cancer and several other diseases,” according to scientists from *Shiraz University of Medical Sciences in Iran*. “Also, this substance is useful for the prevention of oxidative damage, cardiovascular diseases, and skin tumors.”

The team tested the topical use of sesame oil extracted from tahini on people with traumatic limb injuries. Pain severity, pain sensitivity and heaviness of the painful site all decreased with the sesame oil—significantly more so than in the placebo group. Plus, there were no adverse effects.



3) Helps with Knee Osteoarthritis

Sesame's antioxidant and anti-inflammatory effects are also valuable for knee osteoarthritis. Fifty adults with the condition received either 40 grams of sesame seed (about 2.3 tablespoons) or 40 grams of placebo powder daily for two months, along with standard medical care. Those in the sesame group had a significant decrease in inflammatory markers, including

malondialdehyde and high-sensitivity C-reactive protein. Another study compared topical sesame oil with diclofenac gel, a non-steroidal anti-inflammatory (NSAID) drug, in patients with knee osteoarthritis.

4) Boosts Memory

When sesame seeds are roasted and pressed to extract the oil, the leftover material is sesame oil cake (SOC). While considered a byproduct, SOCs contain sesaminol glucoside and lignans, including sesamin, sesamol and sesaminol. Animal studies have found that SOC protects against cognitive impairment, leading researchers to evaluate the effects of sesame oil cake extract (SOCE) on cognitive function in adults with memory impairment. After 12 weeks of SOCE intake, levels of amyloid- β , which is associated with cognitive decline, decreased significantly, while verbal memory abilities markedly improved.

5) Improves Rheumatoid Arthritis

Intrigued by sesame's anti-inflammatory powers, a research team in Iran studied the effects of sesamin from sesame on rheumatoid arthritis, a disease characterized by inflammation. Patients received either a placebo or 200-milligram sesamin supplement daily for six weeks. The sesamin group had significant improvements in inflammatory markers, along with a reduction in tender joints and pain severity. ■

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