

Benefits of Dates

يُنْبِتُ لَكُمْ بِهِ الزَّرْعَ وَالزَّيْتُونَ وَالنَّخِيلَ وَالْأَعْنَابَ وَمِنْ كُلِّ الثَّمَرَاتِ إِنَّ فِي ذَلِكَ لَآيَةً لِّقَوْمٍ يَتَفَكَّرُونَ

He caused crops to develop for you with it, and the olives and the date palms and the grapevines, and all kinds of fruits. Truly, in that is a sign for a folk who reflect

The health benefits of dates are uncountable. Muslims generally break their fast by eating dates. Our Nabi (saw) is reported to have said:

أَنْ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ قَالَ ' إِذَا أَفْطَرَ أَحَدُكُمْ فَلْيُفْطِرْ عَلَي تَمْرٍ , فَإِنَّهُ بَرَكَةٌ , فَإِنْ لَمْ يَجِدْ تَمْرًا فَالْمَاءُ , فَإِنَّهُ طَهُورٌ '

"If anyone of you is fasting, let him break his fast with dates. In case he does not have them, then with water. Verily water is a purifier." (Tirmidi-Abu Dawood)

Nabi (saw) used to break his fast by eating some dates before offering Mag hrib salaah, and if ripe dates were not available, he used to substitute them with some dried grapes. When they too were not available, he used to have a few sips of water, according to some reports. Modern science has proven that dates are part of a healthy diet. They contain sugar, fat and proteins, as well as important vitamins. Hence the great importance attached to them by the Prophet (saw).

Dates are also rich in natural fibres. Modern medicine has shown that they are effective in preventing abdominal cancer. They also surpass other fruits in the sheer variety of their constituents. They contain oil, calcium, sulphur, iron, potassium, phosphorous, manganese, copper and magnesium. In other words, one date is a minimum of a balanced and healthy diet. Arabs usually combine dates with milk and yogurt or bread, butter and fish. This combination indeed makes a self-sufficient and tasty diet for both mind and body. Dates and date palms have been mentioned in the Holy Qur'an 20 times, thus showing their importance.

The Prophet (saw) likened a good Muslim to the date palm, saying, “Among trees, there is a tree like a Muslim. Its leaves do not fall.”

Sayyidah Mariam (AS), mother of Nabi ‘Isa (AS), had dates as her food when she felt labour pains and during confinement. They are definitely the “crown of sweets”, and ideal food which is easy to digest, and within half an hour of taking it, the tired body regains a renewed vigour. The reason for this is that a shortage of sugar in the blood is the main factor that makes people feel hungry and not an empty stomach as is often assumed. When the body absorbs the nutritional essence of a few dates, the feeling of hunger becomes appeased. When one breaking the fast with dates takes some other food afterwards, he cannot eat much. It would seem that breaking the fast with dates then helps one avoid excessive eating.

Experiments have also shown that dates contain some stimulants that strengthen the muscles of the uterus in the last months of pregnancy. This helps the dilation of the uterus at the time of delivery on one hand and reduces the bleeding after delivery on the other. Dieticians consider dates as the best food for women in confinement and those who are breast-feeding. This is because dates contain elements that assist in alleviating depression in mothers and enriching the breast-milk with all the elements needed to make the child healthy and resistant to disease. The Prophet (saw) has emphasized the importance of dates and their effectiveness in the growth of the foetus. He has also recommended they be given to women.

Modern dietary institutes now recommend dates to be given to children suffering from a nervous nature or hyperactivity. While modern science has also proven the effectiveness of dates in preventing diseases of the respiratory system.

Sayyidah Aa’isha (RA), wife of Prophet (saw), used to prescribe dates for those suffering from giddiness. It is now well known that a fall in the level of the sugar in the blood and low blood pressure are among the causes of giddiness. She was also reported to have used dates combined with cucumber to treat her over-slim condition! She said, “They’ve tried to fatten me giving me everything. But I did not become fat. Then they fattened me with cucumber and ripe dates and I gained!”

In the early years of Islam, dates served as food for Muslim warriors. They used to carry them in special bags hung at their sides. They are the best stimulant for muscles and so the best food for a warrior about to engage in battle.

The Prophet (saw) used to combine dates with bread sometimes. At other times he mixed ripe dates with cucumber, or dates combined with ghee. He used to take all varieties of dates, but he preferred the variety called Ajwah.



Ajwah is a soft dry variety of date fruit from Saudi Arabia. It is cultivated in the city of Madinah. It is a delightfully soft and fruity date with fine texture.

Ajwah dates are afforded a great position for their health and protective benefits.

"Whoever has seven Ajwah dates every morning he will not be harmed on that day by poison or magic." (Bukhari)

"Ajwah dates are from paradise. (Tirmidhi)

Referring to eating seven Ajwah dates, the Prophet Muhammad (saw) said, *"He will not be harmed by anything until he reaches the evening."* (Sahih Muslim)