

Health & Wellbeing with Sweet Cherries

The official nutrition report of the Victorian Cherry Association



Sweet cherries are rich in flavour and a wonderful source of fibre, potassium and Vitamin C, which are essential for good health. However, cherries really begin to shine with their antioxidant content. What a delicious way to help build health and wellbeing!

Cherries are abundant in a particular group of antioxidants called anthocyanins, which are responsible for the red/purple colour of cherries. Antioxidant compounds in foods are absorbed and boost the antioxidant capacity of the blood, potentially lowering the risk of chronic disease such as heart disease and some cancers (Ferretti 2010).

The sweetness of cherries comes from the natural sugars present, yet they still only have 250 kilojoules (60 calories) in a 100g serve, making them the perfect summer snack. Like most fruits cherries have virtually no fat and are free of cholesterol. In addition, the fibre in cherries is perfect for helping to keep our insides healthy and regular. One serve of cherries (100g) provides 1.5g of fibre, which is about 6% of our daily needs.

Vitamin C

Over the years we have heard a lot about vitamin C including its role as an antioxidant and for helping the body to absorb iron from our diet. However many of us may not know that vitamin C plays other roles in our health. Vitamin C is necessary to form collagen, which is critical for healthy bones, teeth, and cartilage. Collagen is even part of our arterial walls. Without sufficient vitamin C in our diet, many neurotransmitters and hormones would not be made. The good news is that just one delicious serve (100g) of cherries provides over 40% of our daily needs of vitamin C.

Nutrients in One Serve of Cherries

NUTRIENT	AMOUNT
Kilojoules	250
Calories	60
Protein g	0.8
Fat g	0.2
Cholesterol mg	0
Carbohydrate g	12.9
Fibre g	1.5

Vitamins & Minerals in One Serve of Cherries

NUTRIENT	AMOUNT	% OF DAILY NEEDS
Vitamin C mg	19	42
Niacin equivalents mg	0.63	4
Magnesium mg	8	2.5
Calcium mg	22	2.2
Potassium mg	230	6-8
Sodium mg	0	N/A
Fibre g	1.5	1.5

One serve = 100g
g = grams
mg = milligrams
N/A = Not Applicable
Source: NUUTAB 2010



Antioxidants & Bioactive Compounds in Cherries

Cherries are rich in antioxidants, such as anthocyanins, which act to lower the levels of inflammation in the body, helping to avoid chronic conditions such as heart disease (McCune 2011; Kelley 2013). Cherries have compounds that work to lower the risk of gout and gout attacks, and seem to have a positive influence on brain health and muscle recovery after exercise (Jacob 2003; Zhang 2012; Bell 2014; Rabello de Lima 2015).

Fibre

Cherries contain fibre, which is well known for keeping our insides healthy and regular. Fibre is also used by the healthy bacteria in our large bowel to produce compounds that help protect us from bowel cancer.



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Ten Very Good Reasons to Eat Cherries

- 1 Cherries look luscious, taste delicious and are truly versatile (superb fresh or cooked and tasty in both savoury and sweet dishes). They are also a convenient healthy snack.
- 2 Cherries are low in kilojoules, without fat or cholesterol. That makes them a must for any healthy diet, including a weight loss diet.
- 3 Cherries are a good source of potassium, while having zero sodium, making them ideal for keeping our blood pressure healthy.
- 4 Published research strongly suggests that cherry eaters have a lower risk of gout and gout attacks.
- 5 One serve of cherries (100g) provides over 40% of our daily needs of vitamin C.
- 6 Cherries are rich in antioxidants, such as anthocyanins. Anthocyanins are linked to lower levels of inflammation in the body, which in turn, helps to keep us healthy through life.
- 7 Along with good rehydration and nutrition, cherries seem to help the body recover from exercise-induced muscle damage.
- 8 Cherries have a medium Glycemic Index (GI), meaning they have only a modest effect on blood glucose (sugar) levels. That makes a serve of cherries an ideal snack for everyone, including those with diabetes.
- 9 Cherries provide fibre, keeping us healthy on the inside.
- 10 All this makes cherries great value for money!