

# Health Benefits of Teff



Teff is a tiny grain, smaller than a poppy seed, in the millet family. Its name comes from the Amharic word “lost” since, due to its small size, it is often lost in harvesting. Because the grain is too small to mill, all varieties of teff are whole grain.

Teff is grown mostly in Ethiopia, a country, famous for its long-distance runners. Teff is a staple in Ethiopian diets, providing 70% of calories and 2/3 of daily protein. Teff varieties include grains from white to reddish brown.

Teff has a mild, nutty flavor and makes a tasty porridge. It cooks in just 15 minutes and can be made into polenta, or added to veggie burgers, cakes, cookies or breads.

## WHAT MAKES TEFF GREAT?

### *Nutrition*

- 1 cup cooked teff provides 255 Calories, 10 gm protein, 8 gm fiber, 2 gm fat, no cholesterol

### *Protein*

Teff grains contain 11% protein and are an excellent source of amino acids, especially lysine, the amino acid often missing in other grains. Lysine is essential for the production of proteins, hormones, enzymes, collagen and elastin. Lysine also supports calcium absorption, energy production and immune function.

A protein missing from teff is gluten. Teff is a delicious and nutritious addition to a gluten-free lifestyle.

### *Minerals*

Teff is an excellent source of iron. Even conservative estimates indicate teff is a better source of iron than most other grains. For example, 3.5 oz (100gm) of teff flour provides 37% of the Daily Value (DV) for iron, while the same amount of wheat flour offers 5%.

Teff also provides more calcium than most other grains. A 3/4 cup serving of teff porridge contains about 87 mg of calcium vs 16 mg in 3/4 cup cooked oatmeal.

A 3/4 cup cooked teff serving also provides 22% DV of magnesium, 12% DV of zinc and 223% DV of manganese.

It is also a good source of copper, potassium, phosphorus, selenium and is low in sodium.

### *Fiber*

Teff has a high fiber content per serving. When cooked, teff has a lower glycemic index compared to other grains, preventing blood sugar spikes. For those with diabetes, teff, along with other grains, should be consumed in moderation.

### *Fat*

Teff is only 3% fat, and contains the essential omega 6 and omega 3 fatty acids.

## BUYING AND USING TEFF

Teff can be purchased as a whole grain or ground into flour. Whole intact teff is considered the optimal choice. Most teff can be found in stores that feature Bob’s Red Mill products or ordered online. Once opened, store teff in cool, dry place in a tightly-sealed container (the refrigerator or freezer) where it will store up to a year.

Uncooked teff grains can be used in baking (cakes, breads, muffins, etc) like you would use seeds. It can also be added to soups and stews as a thickener.

To prepare teff porridge, add 1/2 cup teff grains to 2 cups boiling water. Reduce heat, cover and simmer 15-20 minutes or until water is absorbed. Once cooked, store leftovers in the fridge up to 5 days.



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**Teff grains** make a great porridge substitute for oatmeal or wheat farina. They can also be used to make polenta, or added to veggie burgers to boost nutrition. For a simple salad, toss cooked teff with olive oil, garlic, vinegar and fresh herbs. Top with roasted vegetables. Teff also makes a great filling for stuffed peppers, or mixed into pilafs. Or just toss cooled cooked teff with salad greens or veggie side dishes.

**Teff flour** can be substituted for wheat or other flour in dishes such as pancakes, cookies, cakes, muffins and breads. Keep in mind that teff lacks gluten, and like other gluten-free flours, often requires a binder such as xanthan gum. This step can be avoided if substituting teff for 50% of gluten flour in baked goods.

Due to the difficulty in harvesting such a small grain, teff may cost a little more. A 1-pound bag of teff grains can cost about \$5 and flour runs a little higher. The flour will last a long time if you are substituting 50% for wheat. However you use teff, this tiny grain provides big nutrition and a nutty flavor your family will love.

## REFERENCES

BobsRedMill.com  
Ethnomed.org  
Nutritiondata.self.com  
Nutritionvalue.org  
Teffco.com  
Wholegrainscouncil.org

## Ginger Teff Cookies

PrecisionNutrition.com

### Ingredients:

1 cup teff flour	1 banana, mashed
1 cup almond meal	1 tsp ginger
1/2 cup almond butter	1 Tbsp cinnamon
1 1/2 cup coconut sugar	1/4 cup water

### Directions:

1. Preheat oven to 350°F. Line cookie tray with parchment paper.
2. Put all ingredients except water into a high speed blender or food processor. Process until a thick dough forms. Add water and pulse until dough is thick and creamy.
3. If you do not have a high powered blender, blend together water, banana and almond butter. Add remaining ingredients, stirring until well combined.
4. Using a small ice cream scoop or tablespoon, scoop cookies onto tray lined with parchment.
5. Wet your fingers under running water and flatten and shape cookies, re-rinsing if fingers stick to dough.
6. Cook 20 minutes until the top of the cookies have little holes in them. Cool.

## Teff Cocoa Energy Bites

WholeGrainsCouncil.Org

### Ingredients:

1/4 cup teff grains  
7 Medjool dates, pitted  
3/4 cup raw cashews, divided  
2 tsp unsweetened cocoa powder  
1 tsp peanut butter  
1/4 tsp sea salt  
1/4 tsp cinnamon  
2 Tbsp unsweetened coconut chips

### Directions:

1. Preheat oven to 350°F. Line baking pan with parchment paper.
2. Spread teff grains on pan and toast, stirring occasionally, about 20 minutes. Alternatively, place grains in a dry skillet over medium heat and toast until fragrant.
3. In a food processor, add dates, 1/2 cup cashews, cocoa powder, salt and cinnamon and process until smooth paste forms.
4. Roughly chop the remaining 1/4 cup cashews and coconut chips.
5. Stir cashews, coconut and toasted grains into date-cashew mixture.
6. Roll into bite-size balls and enjoy. (Makes 15 1" balls). Store leftovers in an airtight container in the refrigerator.

