

super food

gojis

Gojis are the latest fruit to be hailed worldwide as a nutritional powerhouse, but is it really a super food, or just marketing hype? CATHERINE SAXELBY investigates

Gojis, also known as goji berries or wolfberries, are dark red fruits around the same size as a sultana. Part of the nightshade family (which includes tomato and capsicum), gojis grow in the mountains of Nepal, Mongolia, Tibet and China.

Used throughout Asia as part of traditional medicine for many years, gojis have only recently burst onto the Australian scene, available as dried fruit or juice. Touted as the latest super food, gojis are supposedly able to enhance immune function, protect the liver, boost

sperm production, fight cancer, improve energy levels and aid longevity. Most of these claims, however, are unsubstantiated.

What is accepted about gojis is that they pack a lot of vitamins and antioxidants into very few kilojoules. They've been promoted as having the highest antioxidant concentration of any fruit or vegetable, more protein than wheat, more beta-carotene than carrots and a whopping 500 times the vitamin C of oranges. But reliable, independent nutrition information is not yet available.

The bottom line? Like capsicum and tomato, you would expect gojis to be rich in vitamin C, fibre and antioxidants, and you'd expect to find small amounts of many essential minerals. However you can find the same nutrients in other cheaper, more readily available fruit and veg. If you don't mind the expense, by all means snack on gojis, but don't rely on their miracle claims if you have a medical problem.

what's in gojis?

Gojis contain more protein and less sugar than other dried fruits, such as sultanas and dried cranberries. One tablespoon of gojis (10g) has 130kJ, 1g protein, virtually no fat and 6g carbohydrate. Goji juice generally contains only 10% goji, blended with apple or grape juice concentrate. This improves the taste but raises the sugar content to around the same amount you'd find in a soft drink.



Crunchy goji muesli

Makes 8 cups ($\frac{1}{2}$ cup per serve)

Prep time 10 minutes

Cooking time 5 minutes

kj 940 **fat** 12g **sat fat** 1g **fibre** 4g

2 cups (180g) rolled oats

1 cup (60g) bran cereal

$\frac{1}{2}$ cup (70g) slivered almonds

$\frac{1}{2}$ cup (70g) coarsely chopped macadamias

$\frac{1}{2}$ cup (60g) coarsely chopped pecans

$\frac{1}{2}$ cup (100g) pepitas (pumpkin seeds)

$\frac{1}{3}$ cup (80ml) maple syrup

1 cup (100g) gojis

$\frac{3}{4}$ cup (45g) coarsely chopped dried apple

$\frac{1}{2}$ cup (75g) coarsely chopped dried apricots

1. Preheat oven to 200C or 180C fan. Combine oats, bran, nuts and pepitas in a large bowl. Place maple syrup in a small microwave-safe bowl and heat

for 1 minute at 50%. Drizzle syrup over oat mixture and toss to coat ingredients well.

2. Spread mixture onto a non-stick baking tray and bake for 15 minutes, stirring twice, until mixture is lightly toasted. Cool. Add remaining ingredients and store in an airtight container for 3-4 weeks (longer in the fridge). Serve with yogurt or milk.

how to serve gojis

- Eat from the pack as a snack or mid-afternoon pick-me-up.
- Add to your favourite biscuit, muffin or muesli slice recipe.
- Infuse 10-15 gojis in boiling water for three minutes for tea.
- Sprinkle over muesli or porridge, or add to yogurt or fruit salad.