



## MANGO & NUTRITION FAQ

### **Is one mango one serving of fruit?**

A serving of fruit according to the United States Department of Agriculture's *My Plate*, is one cup.<sup>1</sup> Because mangos vary in size, smaller mangos, such as the Honey mango (Ataulfo) may yield 1 cup of fruit, and larger mangos, such as the Haden or Kent, may provide more than 2 cups of fruit.

### **What is the nutritional value of mangos?**

Mangos are one of the richest sources of vitamin C, providing 50% of the daily value in each  $\frac{3}{4}$  cup serving. They're also a good source of folate and copper, and provide 2 grams of fiber (7% DV) and 8% DV of vitamin A. The bright yellow flesh is a cue that they contain valuable polyphenols, or natural plant-based compounds that have been the focus of multiple studies. See the [Mango Nutrition Facts Label](#).

### **What is the sugar content of mangos?**

A  $\frac{3}{4}$  cup serving of mango contains 17 grams of total sugars with 0 added sugars. The naturally occurring sugars help make mangos taste so deliciously sweet, but this is a good sweet. These natural sugars (fructose) differs from the added sugars found in sugar sweetened beverages and other treats. Mangos may taste like a treat, but they're incredibly nutrient-dense - offering an abundance of nutrients in every bite.

### **Can you eat mangos if you are diabetic?**

Absolutely. Mangos may taste so deliciously sweet that they feel like a treat, but they're incredibly nutrient-dense and can easily be included as part of a healthy diet for individuals with diabetes. Mangos are classified as a low glycemic food, according to the American Diabetes Association, and research has demonstrated that mangos may help maintain normal blood sugar levels.<sup>17</sup>

According to the American Diabetes Association, "A healthy meal plan for people with diabetes is generally the same as a healthy diet for anyone – low in saturated and trans fat, moderate in salt and sugar, with meals based on lean protein, non-starchy vegetables, whole grains, good fats and fruit."<sup>2</sup> The main goal of a diabetic-friendly diet is to help keep blood sugar levels controlled. Carbohydrates (found in grains, legumes, fruits, vegetables, and some dairy products) provide energy and essential nutrients to the body, however they do have a greater impact on blood sugar levels than either protein or fat.<sup>3</sup>

For individuals with type 1 or type 2 diabetes, keeping an eye on portion size when eating fruit is key for managing blood sugar levels. As a general guideline, one serving of

fruit provides 15 grams of carbohydrates, and one  $\frac{3}{4}$  cup serving of fresh mango provides 19 grams of carbohydrates.<sup>4 \*</sup>

In addition to providing carbohydrates, mangos also provide fiber, vitamins, minerals, and are a nutrient-dense addition to a healthful diet. In summary, while no foods are off-limits for individuals with diabetes, keeping an eye on portion size and carbohydrate content of foods is helpful in managing blood sugar levels.

### **Can mangos be eaten on a low carb diet?**

According to the 2015 Dietary Guidelines for Americans, 45 to 65 percent of a person's total daily calorie intake should come from carbohydrates.<sup>7</sup> For someone who consumes 2,000 calories per day, this is equivalent to approximately 225 to 325 grams of carbohydrates per day. The Recommended Dietary Allowance (RDA), or minimum recommended carbohydrate intake for both men and women is 130 grams.<sup>8</sup> While there is no official definition for a low-carb diet, carbohydrate intake is often below 130 grams per day on low-carb diets – although this amount does vary – depending on the recommendations. A  $\frac{3}{4}$  cup serving of mango provides 19 grams of carbohydrates, which fits well into most low-carbohydrate eating plans.<sup>1</sup>

It's also important to keep in mind that multiple studies have shown that a diet, which emphasizes a variety of plant foods, including unsweetened fruit as part of an overall healthy diet may help reduce the risk for chronic diseases, such as hypertension, cardiovascular disease, stroke, and cancer.<sup>9-11</sup>

### **Why are some people allergic to mangos?**

Mangos can cause an allergic reaction in some people, although it is fairly uncommon. Most allergic reactions to mangos are skin rashes, which usually results in response to touching the mango peel. According to the American College of Allergy, Asthma & Immunology, the rind of the mango fruit and the sap from the mango tree contain urushiol, an oily, organic allergenic chemical that is also found in poison ivy, poison oak, and poison sumac.<sup>12</sup> This makes sense considering that mangos are in the same botanical family as poison ivy and poison oak called *Anacardiaceae*.<sup>13-14</sup> Contact with urushiol by touching mango tree leaves, bark, or the skin of mango fruit may cause allergic contact dermatitis, an itchy, blistering skin condition.

The good news is that your days ahead may not be entirely mango-less. Although some individuals can have allergies to the mango flesh, the mango's skin is most often the culprit. The most commonly consumed part of the mango fruit (the pulp or flesh) does not contain urushiol. You can attempt to avoid coming in contact with urushiol by having someone else cut the fruit or by wearing thick non-latex gloves when preparing and slicing the mango.

Additionally, although labeled with a low/undetermined degree of association, some people who report sensitivity to latex may have adverse reactions to mango skin. Latex is a milky fluid that secretes from rubber trees, or *Hevea brasiliensis*, when the plant is cut. It is used to make medical supplies, gloves, rubber bands, balloons, and toys.<sup>15</sup>

According to the American Latex Association, some of the same proteins from latex are also found in fruits, which may cause the allergic reactions in sensitive individuals.<sup>16</sup>

For medical advice, diagnosis, and treatment, it's best to consult with your healthcare provider.

### **Can I eat the skin on a mango?**

For those who have allergic reactions when coming in contact with mango skin, it would be best to steer clear from eating the mango peel/skin. The mango skin contains urushiol, a compound found in poison ivy and poison oak, and may cause an allergic reaction for some individuals. This reaction can produce the same type of allergic reactions as poison ivy, poison oak, or poison sumac, including skin lesions, or swollen lips and tongue. While a mango allergy is rare, you'll want to make sure you're not allergic to mango before coming into contact with the skin of these fruits.

**The skin of mango is edible and can be often consumed in many preparations. Mango skin is enjoyed by many cultures.**

### **What are the potential health benefits of the nutrients found in mangos?**

Mangos contain over 20 different vitamins and minerals, helping to make them a superfood. The nutrients in mango help support various benefits to your body including immune function, cardiovascular, cognitive, and neurologic function. Check out the approved [Mango Nutrition Messages](#) to learn more.

Research studies surrounding the health benefits of mangos are ongoing in areas such as diabetes and obesity, gut health, heart health, skin health and cancer. For more information on the research surrounding mangos, check out the [Mango Nutrition Handout](#) and the [Research Section](#) on mango.org.

### **How do you choose a perfectly ripe mango?**

Multiple varieties of mangos are available throughout the year – each with their own unique characteristics, including color and size. The red or green color that appears on some varieties is not an indicator of ripeness. That's why it's important to keep in mind that color is not the best indicator of ripeness. *Always judge by feel.* You'll simply want to give the mango a gentle squeeze and if it gives a little bit, it's ripe and ready to eat! Use your experience with produce such as peaches or avocados, which also become softer as they ripen. Ripe mangos will sometimes have a fruity aroma at their stem ends, as well. View these helpful tips on the "[How to Choose a Mango](#)" section at mango.org.

### **How long will a ripe mango last on the kitchen counter? Can you refrigerate it after it is ripe?**

Just like peaches and avocados, mangos also become softer as they ripen. "Feel" is the best indicator of a mango's ripeness – squeeze the mango gently and a ripe mango will give slightly. Once a mango is fully ripe, it can be stored in the refrigerator to prevent further ripening. Ripe mangos can be refrigerated whole for up to five days, or two to three days when cut or pureed. For more information regarding ripening and storing mangos, check out [this section](#) of mango.org.

### How do you cut a mango?

Cutting a mango is as easy as 1, 2, 3! The most important thing to remember is that the mango has a long, flat seed in the center of the fruit. First, stand the mango on your cutting board stem end down and hold. Place your knife about 1/4" from the widest center line and cut down through the mango. Repeat on the other side, and you'll have two mango "cheeks." Secondly, cut parallel slices or a checkerboard into the mango flesh, being careful not to cut through the skin. And lastly, scoop the mango slices or cubes out of the mango skin using a tablespoon and enjoy! For more information on cutting mangos, visit [How To Cut a Mango](http://mango.org) on mango.org

### Can you freeze mangos? For how long?

If you have extra mangos and space to spare in your freezer, you can easily freeze your fresh, ripe mangos for later use! Ripe mangos can be frozen up to 6 months cut or pureed. Simply wash, slice, and dice your ripe mangos, and arrange the slices on a flat baking sheet, cover with plastic wrap, and place in the freezer. Once the mango slices are frozen, store them in an airtight, sealed container or freezer bag. You can also puree mango in a food processor or blender, pour into an airtight, sealed container, and place in the freezer.

- 
1. United States Department of Agriculture. *Choose My Plate*. All About the Fruit Goup. Accessed June, 9, 2016. <http://www.choosemyplate.gov/fruit>
  2. American Diabetes Association. *Diabetes Basics; Diabetes Myths*. Accessed June 13, 2016. <http://www.diabetes.org/diabetes-basics/myths/?loc=db-slabnav>
  3. Wang S. O'Connell B. *Ready, Set, Starting Counting!* Diabetes Care and Educated Dietetic Practice Group. American Dietetic Association. 2011.
  4. American Diabetes Association. *Fruits*. Accessed June 13, 2016. <http://www.diabetes.org/food-and-fitness/food/what-can-i-eat/making-healthy-food-choices/fruits.html>
  5. Evans S, Meister M, Mahmood M, et al., *Mango Supplementation Improves Blood Glucose in Obese Individuals*. Nutrition and Metabolic Insights. 2014. 7. 77-84.
  6. United States Department of Agriculture. *USDA Food Composition Databases*. Accessed June 13,2016. <https://ndb.nal.usda.gov/ndb/search>
  7. 2015–2020 Dietary Guidelines for Americans. *Appendix 7. Nutritional Goals for Age-Sex Groups Based on Dietary Reference Intakes and Dietary Guidelines Recommendations. Table A7-1. Daily Nutritional Goals for Age-Sex Groups Based on Dietary Reference Intakes and Dietary Guidelines Recommendations*. Accessed June 14, 2016. <http://health.gov/dietaryguidelines/2015/guidelines/appendix-7/>
  8. *Dietary Reference Intakes for Energy, Carbohydrate, Fiber, Fat, Fatty Acids, Cholesterol, Protein, and Amino Acids (2002/2005)*. Accessed July 26, 2016.

- [http://nationalacademies.org/hmd/~media/Files/Activity%20Files/Nutrition/DRI%20DRI\\_Macronutrients.pdf](http://nationalacademies.org/hmd/~media/Files/Activity%20Files/Nutrition/DRI%20DRI_Macronutrients.pdf)
9. Boeing H, Bechthold A, Bub A, et al.,. *Critical review: vegetables and fruit in the prevention of chronic diseases*. European Journal of Nutrition. 2012; 51(6): 637-663.
  10. Belleveia A, Larsson S, Bottai, et al. *Fruit and vegetable consumption and all-cause mortality: a dose-response analysis*. The American Journal of Clinical Nutrition. 2013; 98(2):454-459.
  11. *Fruit and vegetable intake and risk of cardiovascular disease in US adults: the first National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey Epidemiologic Follow-up Study*. The American Journal of Clinical Nutrition. 2002; 76(1): 93-99.
  12. American College of Allergy, Asthma & Immunology. *Can Reaction to Poison Ivy Cause Mango Allergy?* Accessed June 14, 2016.  
<http://acaai.org/resources/connect/ask-allergist/can-reaction-poison-ivy-cause-mango-allergy>
  13. United States Department of Agriculture Natural Resources Conservation Service. *Classification for Kingdom Plantae Down to Family Anacardiaceae*. Accessed June 14, 2016.  
<http://plants.usda.gov/java/ClassificationServlet?source=display&classid=Anacardiaceae>
  14. United States Department of Agriculture Natural Resources Conservation Service. *Plant Guide*. MANGO. Accessed June 14, 2016.  
[http://plants.usda.gov/plantguide/pdf/cs\\_main3.pdf](http://plants.usda.gov/plantguide/pdf/cs_main3.pdf)
  15. American Latex Allergy Association. *Tips to Remember: Latex Allergy*. Created by the Public Education Committee of the American Academy of Allergy, Asthma and Immunology. Updated 2003. Accessed June 16, 2016.  
<http://latexallergyresources.org/articles/tips-remember-latex-allergy>
  16. American Latex Allergy Association. *Latex Cross-reactive foods Fact Sheet*. Tom Grier for Latex Allergy 101. Updated 10.8.2015. Accessed June 16, 2016.  
<http://latexallergyresources.org/latex-cross-reactive-foods-fact-sheet>
  17. American Diabetes Association. *Glycemic Index and Diabetes* . Accessed Jan 4, 2019. <http://www.diabetes.org/food-andfitness/food/what-can-i-eat/understanding-carbohydrates/glycemic-index-and-diabetes.html>