

Real Foods That Heal



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Flax Seeds

The more I read, the more I am convinced that flax seeds can be a healthy part of all of our diets. For heart health and anti-inflammatory effects, they are a great source of omega-3 fatty acids. They are also a good source of fiber for intestinal health. And specifically, these little seeds have significant data supporting their role in reducing risk of breast cancer. They are very high in lignans, cancer protective compounds with a phytoestrogenic effect. That means that they have a weak ability to bind to estrogen receptors and may block some of the long term tumor promoting risks of natural estrogen. Laboratory and human data have shown some protective benefit against breast cancer development. Though the oil itself has some health benefits, flax oil does not contain lignans, and would not have the same cancer protective qualities. Whole flaxseeds are almost indigestible, so I recommend grinding them in a small electric coffee grinder which you can keep separately for just flax. The recommended daily dose for women is 1 – 2 tablespoons ground flaxseed per day. You need to keep the seeds in the refrigerator to avoid oxidation and rancidity, and only grind as much as you are going to use for one day. You can sprinkle them on other foods, or make a smoothie! My own flax smoothie recipe is here, so drink to your health and enjoy!

Easy flax smoothie

This recipe not only uses the cancer preventive and heart healthy effects of flax seeds, but also takes advantage of the ellagic acid in raspberries, another compound with promise in preventing breast cancer.

Grind 1tbsp. organically grown flax seeds to a fine powder in an electric coffee mill.

In a blender, mix ½ ripe banana, 1/3 cup of frozen or fresh raspberries, ½ cup plain low-fat yogurt (milk or soy), ½ cup apple or pear juice, 1/4tsp. of ground cinnamon, and the ground flax seeds. Blend until smooth and enjoy!

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