

# 'Tadpole water' might sound gross—but it could be surprisingly good for your health

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How far would you go to lose weight? Maybe cut down on sugar? Take

up the [Couch to 5K challenge](#)? Well, some TikTokkers are so eager to drop the pounds that they've taken the extreme sounding measure of drinking "tadpole water."

Don't worry, it's not quite as bad as it seems. The trend doesn't actually involve downing a glass of frog larvae. Rather, some [social media users](#) are chugging a viscous mixture of water, [lemon juice](#) and chia seeds. The appearance and consistency of the concoction is similar to a glass of frogspawn.

Tadpole water fans say it helps them to feel fuller and lose weight but others find the slimy texture [makes them gag](#).

So, is this trendy drink worth the trouble? What's the science behind the social media claims?

Claims that this lemony chia seed water helps support weight loss may not be that far-fetched.

Chia seeds are [high in fiber](#), which aids digestion, promotes a feeling of fullness and regulates [blood sugar](#). The fiber in chia seeds is mainly soluble, which forms a gel-like substance in the stomach, [slowing digestion](#) and providing a steady flow of energy. So tadpole water can help you to feel fuller for longer, which could help reduce appetite and overall calorie intake.

And that's not all. Chia seeds could also be a beneficial addition to a [heart-healthy diet](#). The seeds are one of the richest plant-based sources of [omega-3 fatty acids](#), which are beneficial for [heart health](#). Omega-3 [fatty acids](#) can help to lower triglycerides— a type of blood fat that's our main source of energy and essential for good health but can raise the risk of heart disease at high levels. There's also evidence to suggest that chia seeds can help lower blood pressure as well as reduce blood sugar,

inflammation and improve [cholesterol levels](#). They also contain a significant [amount of protein](#)—making them a great plant-based [protein source](#) for vegetarians—and they're [nutrient dense](#).

Chia seeds contain numerous [vitamins](#) (thiamine, riboflavin, niacin, folic acid and vitamins A and C), including [antioxidants](#), which help the body to fight harmful free radicals reducing oxidative stress—an imbalance of free radicals and antioxidants in your body that leads to cell damage—which may lower the [risk of chronic diseases](#), such as cancer and heart disease. Chia seeds are higher in some minerals, such as calcium, magnesium, potassium and phosphorus, than [some other cereals](#).

Chia seeds can absorb up to [12 times their weight](#) in water, so lemon chia seed water helps to promote the [feeling of being full](#), and hydration.

Sufficient hydration is essential for health. It is involved in virtually [all functions](#) of the human body, including [metabolic processes](#), [maintaining the body's core temperature](#), circulation, lubrication of joints, transportation of nutrients to cells and aids in the removal of [waste products](#). Water also [aids digestion](#)—breaking down food, absorbing nutrients and preventing constipation. [Research](#) also highlights that sufficient water intake [maintains the gut](#) microbiota and helps support the immune system.

Adding lemon juice to chia seed water not only makes the drink more palatable but it can also supplement some of the health benefits of the other ingredients. Lemon juice is [high in vitamin C](#), which can help boost the immune system, enhance iron absorption, aid digestion and improve skin health. Lemon juice can also [promote heart health](#) by helping to reduce blood pressure and cholesterol levels.

## Words of warning

But, before you jump on the TikTok tadpole water bandwagon, there are reasons to be cautious.

The gelling properties of chia seeds can be [a choking hazard](#). If eaten dry, chia seeds can expand in the esophagus and cause a blockage, so always soak the seeds for 15–30 minutes before consumption.

If you suddenly start drinking lemon chia seed water and your gut isn't used to a [high fiber diet](#), then you might find the drink causes [digestive discomfort](#), including constipation, diarrhea, bloating, gas and abdominal pain. People with inflammatory bowel conditions like Crohn's disease should approach lemon chia water with caution: it can cause flare ups.

Also, eating chia seeds can cause interactions with some medications. For example, eating chia seeds [may increase](#) the activity of blood pressure medications, which could lead to low blood pressure.

Finally, although rare, the proteins in chia seeds can trigger an [allergic reaction](#). Symptoms may include itching, swelling, hives or even difficulty breathing.

Overall, however, chia seeds are a versatile and valuable addition to a healthy diet that can easily be incorporated into a [variety of dishes](#), including smoothies, oatmeal, yogurt and baked goods. The seeds can even be used as an [egg substitute](#) in vegan recipes.

However, as with everything in life, moderation is key. Overeating chia seeds can lead to [weight gain](#). And there's no need to endure the sensation of drinking slime if tadpole [water](#) makes you gag. You can get the same health benefits by adding [chia seeds](#) to healthy foods you already eat—and drinking [enough water](#) throughout the day to stay well hydrated.

So, there's no need to glug the fake frogspawn unless you really want to.

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