



What do we know about chicken eggs?

People of all ages can eat and appreciate eggs. Boiled, scrambled or fried, eggs form the basis of an ideal breakfast. Eggs can be prepared quickly, are relatively affordable, and are always available in stores.



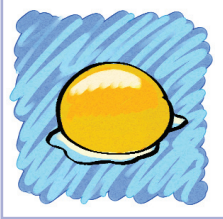
Egg composition



Eggs contain lots of nutrients and a complete set of easy-to-digest proteins. They are a useful source of folic acid, biotin and choline. Eggs also contain selenium (a powerful antioxidant), amino acids (useful in building new human tissue), large quantities of vitamins (A, E, D, B12, B3), minerals and trace elements (magnesium, potassium, phosphorus and calcium), all of which are essential for normal body function.



Benefits and health risks



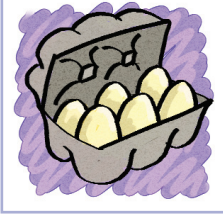
Eggs contain cholesterol, which frightens many people away from their other benefits. While it is true that too much cholesterol can lead to blocked blood vessels, heart attacks and strokes, limited amounts are required for cardiovascular health.

Despite the differences of opinion about optimal egg consumption, the following facts should be borne in mind:

- a very high percentage (almost 98 percent) of an egg is assimilated into the body after being eaten;
- vitamin E inhibits the development of tumours and strengthens blood vessels and the heart;
- vitamin D, in combination with phosphorous, is good for bones and teeth;
- egg yolks contain lutein, the strongest antioxidant;
- eggs help to prevent the onset of vision problems, especially cataracts;
- eggs are especially good for pregnant women, as they supply most of the substances necessary for the proper development of the foetus; and
- eggs are low in calories, and the lecithin and choline they contain help the body to eliminate fats and cholesterol, making them useful for those who are watching their weight.



Don't forget!



- Eggs must be eaten fresh.
- Eggs are best kept in a refrigerator at a temperature of 2 to 4 degrees Celsius. They should be consumed within a month, while hard-boiled eggs should be eaten within a week.
- Eggs can be stored without the aid of refrigeration. First coat them in oil, then wrap in paper and place inside a cardboard box or basket. Store the packed eggs in a dark place.
- Cooking eggs over the lowest possible heat preserves most of their nutritional properties.
- The recommended daily intake of cholesterol is 300 milligrams. An average medium-sized egg contains 185 milligrams.
- People who have high levels of cholesterol should eat no more than two or three eggs per week.
- Eating raw eggs carries the risk of contracting salmonellosis, a severe intestinal infection. Although it can usually be treated successfully with strong antibiotics, the infection can be fatal.
- In rare cases, children may have allergic reactions after eating eggs.