



Egg – wholesome food

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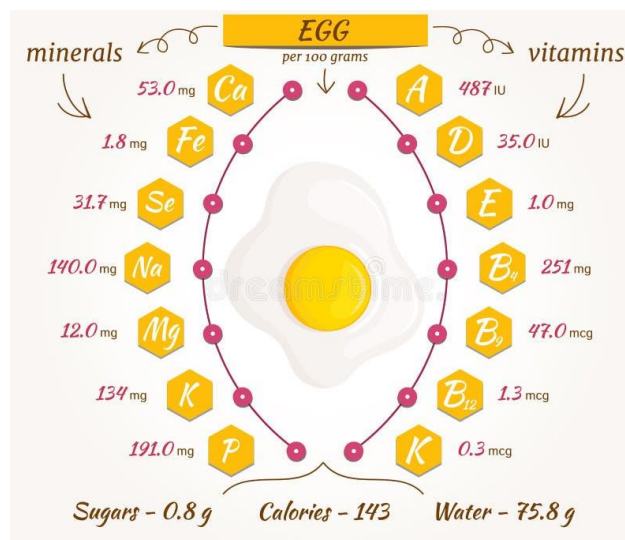
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Introduction

Poultry sector is one of the most perennial industries showing tremendous growth and development, fulfilling both the basic appetite as well as satiety of humans. From eating it in raw form, now served as delicacy cuisine. There is no doubt in the fact that egg is eaten by everyone be it be any gender or any age group. As being health conscious, people are now getting aware of the benefits of eggs, thereby increasing consumption, still per capita consumption is just of 105 eggs/year, which is almost half of the ICMR recommendation that is 180 eggs/year. Egg production in the country has increased from 78.48 billion in 2014-2015 to 138.80 billion numbers in 2022-23, by which India ranks 3rd in global ranking. Due to such high production, poultry eggs are also being exported mainly to Nepal, Oman and Bangladesh thus providing significantly about 3% contribution in GDP, thereby nurturing Indian economy. Revenue of Indian egg market amounts to US\$7.71bn in 2024. This vast industry with enormous production increases the job opportunity. The backyard farming is still the source of livelihood for rural dwellings, especially intended for women.

Egg is the nutrient rich commodity, with good amount vitamins and minerals. It is the cheapest and competent source of protein easily affordable by common man. A medium sized egg of 55g contains 78 calorie, 5g easily digestible fat (oleic acid), 1g carbohydrate, 6g protein, 146g choline which supports memory and mood. Eggs additionally provide with pantothenic acid, phosphorous, vitamin A, monounsaturated fatty acids, vitamin D, vitamin B12, biotin, riboflavin, selenium and iodine. Egg protein is of such a high quality that its biological value has been taken as 100 and it acts as a standard. All the essential amino acids required in human diet are present in egg protein. Egg is an important source of fat soluble vitamins (vit A, D, E, K) and water soluble vitamins of B complex group. However, it does not contain vitamin C. The main drawback is that they are devoid of fibre, at the same time the plus point is that the shell of egg

is even palatable. Egg yolks contain large amounts of both lutein and zeaxanthin. They are powerful antioxidants that accumulate in the retina of the eye, which reduce the risk of cataract and macular degeneration which is common in old age group. The fact that it contains high cholesterol is true but it doesn't adversely affect blood cholesterol level nor impose risk of heart diseases. Eating eggs consistently leads to elevated levels of HDL cholesterol, which has been linked to lower risk of many diseases. Eggs are highly satiating that it reduces calorie intake, thereby promotes weight loss. Thus we see that eggs are favourable for both weight loss and weight gain with health benefits.



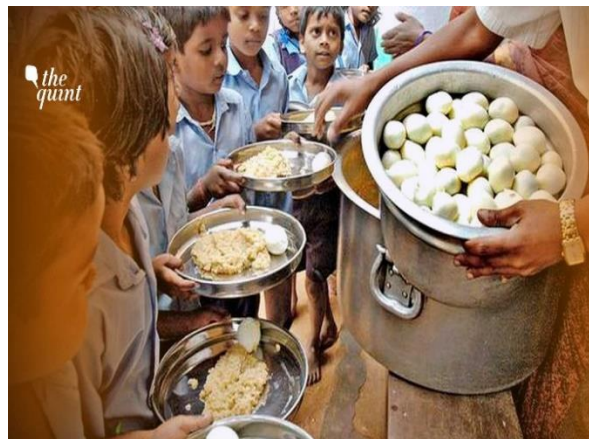
Don't you feel eggs can be called as "SUPER FOOD"??

In this post-corona period, humans are now more concerned about their health after realising the uncertainty of life and that's why importance of nutrition has increased. Ultimately the Darwin's theory of survival of fittest always prevails. Though there were rumours and misconception regarding consumption of eggs that virus transmission occurs through the eggs, but ultimately through studies and research all these were proven wrong and consumption again showed an increasing trend on graph. Parents want their children to consume healthy food, for them quail eggs are best. A large variety of products produced by eggs like egg rasmalai, egg kulfi, rabri, cookies, peda, and nuggets attract youth for consumption and also appeal aesthetically for health. Quail eggs are small and colorful which attracts small children. The youth of today which is gym lover, more focused on body building which drinks protein shakes should intake eggs, which are better than whey for protein source.

The eggs are increasingly being consumed not only as a protein source but also as a healthy diet constituent. Not only people but the Government is doing a lot of work for giving and ensuring good health status for poor and malnourished children like Mid-Day Meal Scheme, they give eggs and food to small children and pregnant females which has really helped them.



Karnataka being the first state to include eggs in meals. As of now, 14 states and union territories of India have incorporated egg as a constituent in their mid-day meal scheme for the children. It has been recommended by the ICMR that consumption of eggs is safe and beneficial for the pregnant females. It enhances the physical and menstrual health of the females too. Up to 1-2 eggs on daily basis in good for women's health. So, at a time where many areas of country are still malnourished, it is recommended to use eggs as an essential dietary constituent as it is advisable for all age groups and is easily accessible. It would surely uplift the nutritional status of a large population.



(Source- The quint)

Poultry Myths and clarification

- Eggs are non-vegetarian, also some sayings exist that welfare of birds is compromised as they are handled and managed cruelly, therefore eggs should not be consumed.
- It is also said that brown or yellow shelled eggs are more nutritious but the fact is that egg nutritive value is nowhere related to the shell colour.
- Eggs are non-vegetarian and cannot be consumed by vegetarians:
- It is the most widely spread misconception that eggs are a part of non-vegetarian diet. However, the reality is that majority of the eggs available for sale in market are unfertilised eggs without any embryo in them. So, scientifically speaking, eggs are a part of vegetarian diet
- Eggs are produced only upon mating between male and female birds:
- It has been believed by people that eggs are only produced upon mating. Whereas, the reality is that eggs are produced as a result of cyclic activity of the female birds. It has nothing to do with mating. Either mating is done or not, eggs would get layed by the birds.
- Eggs are adulterated and injected with harmful substances:



- People in present scenario are very much concerned about the purity of the food products they consume. So, they think that eggs can too be adulterated. But, in reality the chances of egg being adulterated are almost nil.

The egg is diversified unit and can be used in many ways. But the main use is nutritional in our daily life. The egg itself a complete nutritive food which has all the protein and required nutritive values. Egg being a source of Vitamin D and Choline is essential for today's generation. Recent research found that one can obtain around 8.2 μg of vitamin D from a regular serving of two egg. This amount meets the 82% of recommended vitamin D requirement for our body. In former times, eggs were eaten in raw form with milk, but as consciousness is increasing, the population is shifting to healthy habits, but there is a long way still to be covered to make India nourished and self-conscious country. As being an immunity booster, it is needed to enhance the consumption of egg in the current pandemic situation by increasing proper awareness. We need to avoid the discussion of origin of egg as veg or non veg rather we should consider it as hen fruit.

Conclusion

For ages, eggs have been considered as foods of high nutritional value for humans and are widely consumed worldwide. Eggs are a cheap, incredibly super-nutritious protein that, if consumed regularly can provide some health benefits. In recent decades, as functional foods can lower the risk of some diseases, there has been an increase in demand for them and this trend is predicted to continue. Given the widespread recognition of chicken eggs as a functional food with recognized nutritional value and health benefits, mass production and consumption patterns clearly show the continual positive and beneficial consequences that consumers voluntarily avail themselves of.