

Chia Chunks – Craveable Superfood Treats for Your Cat and Dog

If your dog or cat loves meat with a bit of crunch, he'll love these Chia Chunks. This homemade pet treat recipe is simple to prepare yet loaded with valuable nutrition to boost your pet's health.

Reviewed by [Dr. Becker](#)

STORY AT-A-GLANCE

- Chia chunks pet treats are made out of chia seeds and pastured chicken or bison
- Chia, which is the ancient Mayan word for strength, has been valued for its energy-boosting properties for centuries
- Chia seeds are high in protein and contain an impressive amount of plant-based omega-3 fats, or alpha-linolenic acid (ALA)
- Chia seeds are also rich in valuable amino acids, antioxidants, fiber, and flavonoids, along with nutrients such as calcium, phosphorus, magnesium, manganese, and niacin
- A little bit of chia seeds goes a long way, with about 10 grams of fiber in just two tablespoons

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Chia seeds are becoming the new trendy superfood for humans — and for good reason. Chia, which is the ancient Mayan word for strength, has been valued for its energy-boosting properties for centuries.¹

When the seeds first began to be grown as a functional food in the U.S. (which occurred in 2014; most other chia seeds are grown in Mexico and Bolivia), they were being promoted as equine food.

However, these tiny seeds make excellent treats for dogs and cats, too. Here's a recipe you can try.

Ingredients:

- 🐾 Chia seeds
- 🐾 Free range, grass fed meat, such as chicken and bison

Procedure:

1. Cut meat into bite-sized pieces.
2. Roll in chia seeds.
3. Place on ungreased baking sheet.
4. Bake at 350 degrees F for 10 minutes.

5. Let cool and store in your refrigerator for up to a week or in your freezer for a month.



What Makes Chia Seeds So Good for Your Pets?

Chia seeds have a nutritional profile that's similar to flaxseeds but with one significant improvement. Because of the high levels of antioxidants they contain, they're far less prone to oxidation and rancidity and, in fact, may last up to two years with no refrigeration.²

Chia seeds are high in protein and contain an impressive amount of plant-based omega-3 fats, or alpha-linolenic acid (ALA; chia seeds are up to 40% oil, with 60% comprised of omega-3).³ In humans, the ALA omega-3s in chia seeds have been linked to a number of health benefits, many of which may also apply to animals, including:⁴

- Lowering triglycerides and supporting healthy cholesterol levels
- Lowering blood pressure and heart disease risk
- Anti-inflammatory activity
- Liver-protective properties

- Antidiabetic action
- Protection against arthritis, autoimmune disease, and cancer

Chia seeds are also rich in valuable amino acids, antioxidants, fiber, and flavonoids, along with nutrients such as calcium, phosphorus, magnesium, manganese, and niacin. Further, they're a rich source of the phytochemicals myricetin, quercetin, and kaempferol, which are known for their antioxidant, anti-inflammatory, and anticancer properties.⁵

A little bit of chia seeds goes a long way, with about 10 grams of fiber in just two tablespoons. So even the sprinkling of seeds found in these Chia Chunks treats will add meaningful nutrition to your pet's diet. One caveat to be aware of ... chia seeds take on a gelatinous texture when they're mixed with water.

This isn't an issue for this particular recipe, since the seeds are kept dry and baked. However, if you mix chia seeds with water or a wet pet food, be mindful when feeding it to your pet (an overabundance of the seeds could lead to choking).

Treat Your Pet Right — Pastured Chicken and Bison

The only other ingredient in Chia Chunks is high-quality grass fed meat or poultry of your choice. Poultry, such as turkey or chicken is an excellent source of protein and it contains all the B vitamins along with minerals like selenium.

Other nutrients in poultry include zinc, copper, phosphorus, magnesium, and iron, along with sulfur-containing amino acids like cysteine, which help thin mucus in the lungs so it's easier to discharge.

Other amino acids in poultry, notably leucine, isoleucine, and valine, are important for cardiac and skeletal muscle health. Ideally, choose free-range, organic chicken (or turkey).

If you (or your pets) prefer, you can also make these with bison. Bison has a similar nutritional profile to beef, although it is leaner and can be used as a novel form of protein for pets with food allergies or intolerances.

Food sensitivities are quite common these days and can pose a challenge when looking for foods to feed your dog or cat. Pets with food allergies should be placed on novel-protein diets, also called elimination diets, to allow their immune systems to stop overreacting to allergens and give their GI tracts time to detoxify, heal, and function normally again.

Examples of other novel proteins you could include in this recipe are ostrich, quail, rabbit, and duck.

Your Pets Deserve Home Cooking, Too!

Commercial pet foods can be a disaster for your pet's health. Many are primarily grain-based, which is not healthy for most dogs or cats. Fillers like feather meal or soy protein concentrate are often added to boost protein content instead of real meat, and preservatives and other synthetic ingredients are also common.

Even if you feed your pet a higher quality, species-appropriate commercial food, he may miss out on the taste of real food that comes from home-cooked meat simply prepared. Preparing a homemade dog food is an alternative option that's growing in popularity, but it does take time and, certainly, some research to be sure it's nutritionally balanced.

A compromise of sorts is to choose a high-quality food that's commercially prepared and species-appropriate — and then prepare homemade treats so your pet can have the best of both worlds. Many options are available that are quick, easy to prepare and call for just a few ingredients. Chia chunks are just one example to get you started.

Sources and References

¹ [EcoWatch](#), June 9, 2014

² [Weekand](#), September 14, 2023

^{3,4,5} [J Biomed Biotechnol](#). 2012 Nov 21;2012:171956
