

# Onions for weight loss

Did you know that onions, an ingredient which is used in almost every household on a daily basis, can help you lose weight? Yes, you read right! Onions add abundant flavour to food, yet are very low in energy, with only 100kJ (25kCal) per 75g serve. They are also low in sugars and fat, which makes them a star ingredient to include in your everyday meals to help maintain a healthy body weight.



Like all vegetables, onions are naturally low in saturated fat and sodium. When eaten as part of a healthy and varied diet, they help lower blood cholesterol and blood pressure, which is important for a healthy heart. A lifestyle that includes a healthy balanced diet, regular physical activity, adequate sleep, no smoking and effective stress management is important for weight management as well as overall wellbeing.

## Beneath the layers of this humble hero lie many nutritional benefits that can facilitate weight loss

### Fibre:

Onions are rich in soluble fibre, which is great for a healthy gut. Fibre also helps you feel fuller for longer, which is important for effective weight loss.

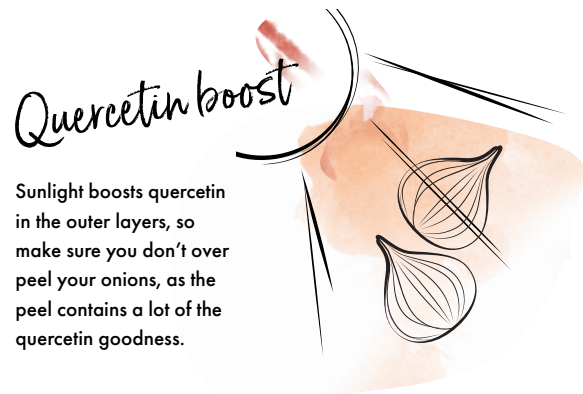
We need approximately 30g of fibre a day and onions provide around 1.6g per 75g serve (½ an onion). Onions also contain fructans, a prebiotic fibre or fermentable carbohydrate, that resists digestion. Onions contain 1.4g of fructans per serve - ideal for the gut microbiome and promoting the growth of healthy bacteria such as bifidobacteria. And if you have a healthy gut, you're more likely to be a healthy weight.

### Quercetin:

Onions are one of the top common food sources of polyphenol antioxidants, specifically one called quercetin. These natural compounds act as antioxidants that help protect against free radical damage and inflammation, both of which can contribute to excess body weight. Research has found that quercetin reduces the fat around your abdomen, called visceral fat, which can significantly impact your health.

### Flavonoids and organosulfur compounds:

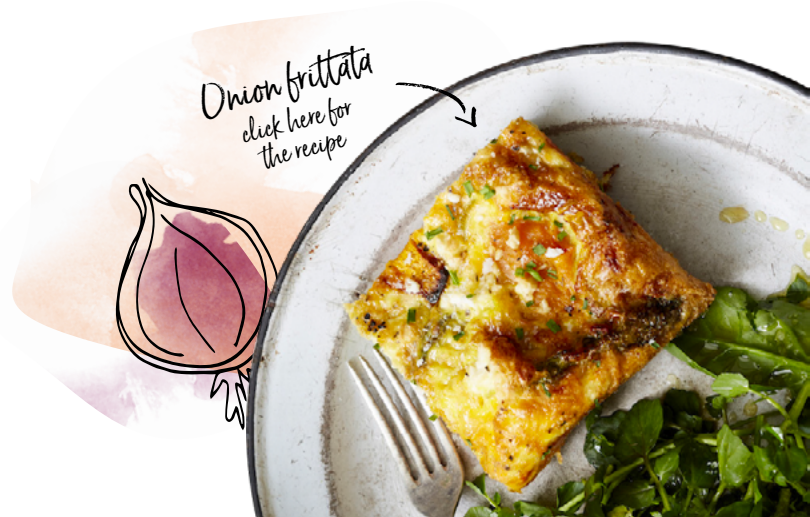
Onions are also a rich source of flavonoids and organosulfur compounds, which have been shown to increase energy expenditure and reduce fat accumulation, thereby facilitating weight loss. This humble vegetable sure punches above its weight (no pun intended!) when it comes to powerful bioactive compounds that can keep your body at a healthy weight.



Sunlight boosts quercetin in the outer layers, so make sure you don't over peel your onions, as the peel contains a lot of the quercetin goodness.

### Simple tips for adding more onions

- Start your day by adding chopped onions to an omelette or fritatta
- Bake some savoury cheese and onion muffins
- Make a simple pasta sauce with fresh tomatoes and Spanish onions
- Salad onions are great for lunch, or spice up your roll with a few Spanish onion rings
- Try an onion sauce to serve with a dinner roast
- Add onions to fried rice for an extra veggie boost



# Be onion ready!

To guarantee onions at every meal, always have some on hand ready to go



Dice up an onion to include in summer salads, top up tacos and burritos, or add delicious flavour to cooked vegetables



Caramelise onions and store in the fridge – ready to add to a sandwich or provide texture in a soup



Make a simple onion pickle by pouring apple cider vinegar over sliced onions and let it sit for 20 minutes. Use in salads, wraps or even munch by itself for a delicious and healthy snack

## Try including onions in everyday low kilojoule meals for the perfect way to maintain healthy weight

1. Raw onions lend a sharp, crisp edge to dips and salads
2. Savour the flavour of an onion and beetroot chutney. When cooked, onions take on a sweetness of their own. Try making a jar of onion and beetroot chutney to liven up homemade sausage rolls or cheese toasties
3. Short on time? Keep chopped frozen onions in your freezer for quick and easy meal preparation
4. Throw in a few small onions when making roast vegetables. The succulent sweetness will add a unique taste dimension
5. For a burst of colour and flavour, try pairing blood oranges and Spanish onions on your salad plate
6. Fresh spicy onion tomato salsa goes well with chicken, fish or meat
7. Try a Tuscan bruschetta with onion as a feature ingredient. It's easier than you might think: gently fry some chopped onion in olive oil, add a drained 400g tin of cannellini beans and a couple of finely chopped sage leaves and tomatoes. Cook for 5 minutes, mash lightly and serve on toasted ciabatta



### Cooking tip

To maximise the levels of antioxidants and vitamins available for absorption, it's best to cook onions soon after cutting them. When cooking in liquids such as stocks, soups or stews, make sure the cooking liquid is consumed, as the water-soluble nutrients leach into the cooking water

