

By Juliet Anna Lukwago

Bananas may seem like an ordinary fruit, but they are packed with essential nutrients that support overall health. Rich in potassium, vitamin B6, vitamin C, fibre and manganese, bananas play a key role in boosting energy, improving digestion and supporting heart health.

Moses Muhumuza, a nutritionist in Ntinda, Kampala, says many people underestimate the value of a simple sweet banana.

"Bananas are fat-free, cholesterol-free and low in sodium, yet rich in nutrients the body needs daily," he says.

A medium banana contains about 422mg of potassium, which helps regulate blood pressure and supports muscle function. It also provides around 3g of fibre,

Why bananas are a go-to nutritional goldmine

PHOTO BY JULIET ANNA LUKWAGO



PRICES IN KAMPALA

A small survey we did in Nakasero market showed a cluster of bananas (*bogoya*) costs between sh3,500 and sh5,000, depending on size. An individual can go for sh500.

important for digestion, preventing constipation and keeping you full for longer.

"As bananas ripen and turn yellow, they become easier to digest and richer in antioxidants,"

Muhumuza says. "They provide quick energy and support immunity."

Bananas are also a good source of vitamin C, which strengthens the immune system and supports healthy skin, as well as vitamin B6, which is important for brain function. The natural sugars — glucose, fructose and sucrose — make bananas a healthy source of instant energy.

Muhumuza adds that bananas can help fight fatigue.

"The nutrients in bananas give both mental and physical energy," he says.

Muhumuza encourages households to grow dessert bananas where possible, noting that they are easy to maintain and

provide both food and income.

For most healthy adults, eating one to two bananas a day is safe and beneficial. However, those with conditions like diabetes or kidney disease should seek medical advice.

Daniel Kamara, another nutritionist, adds that bananas are especially useful for weight management and fitness.

"The fibre slows digestion, helping control blood sugar and keeping you full longer," he says.

For athletes, bananas are an ideal snack before or after exercise. They provide quick energy and help replenish muscle glycogen, while potassium helps prevent muscle cramps.

"Bananas are more than just a common fruit," Kamara notes. "They support heart health, aid digestion and provide energy."