

BY: DR KRISHNA R. RAJPUT

POMEGRANATE: A SUPER FOOD

The health benefits of the pomegranate fruit, and the tree that bears it, are innumerable.

Pomegranate is known as *anar* in Hindi; in Sanskrit it is called *beejpur*, which means 'replete with seeds.'

This fruit symbolises prosperity and fertility. It has been used for thousands of years to cure a wide range of diseases across different cultures and civilisations. It has great nutritional value and numerous health benefits. In Indian culture, the pomegranate is associated with *Bhoomidevi* (the earth goddess) and *Lord Ganesha*. Ayurveda, the ancient Indian medical science, uses the tree's root, bark, flowers, fruit and leaves for medicinal purposes.

This handsome fruit is popular for its deep purple-coloured juice that is packed with lots of antioxidants and has many health benefits.

1. It can help to reduce the risk of a heart attack and strokes. Studies show that pomegranate juice taken daily improves blood flow to the heart. Because of its antioxidant properties, pomegranate keeps bad cholesterol from forming, and thus may help to keep the arteries clear of clots.

2. Pomegranates have very high

levels of antioxidants called flavonoids, which are effective in counteracting against various cancer-causing radicals, and hence more

achieving and maintaining a clear skin with a youthful glow, and even soothe skin inflammation.

7. The antioxidants are thought to help support the immune system.

8. Pomegranate's iron content helps to prevent anemia symptoms that include exhaustion, dizziness, weakness and hearing loss.

9. Apart from this, its anti-oxidants might have some anti-viral properties.

10. Pomegranate juice is given to the women to overcome the feeling of general malaise during menopause.



Other medicinal uses of pomegranates

Stomach disorders. Pomegranate's peel, bark and leaves are used to treat stomach disorders or diarrhea caused by any kind of digestive problems. Drinking tea made from the leaves of this fruit helps in curing digestive problems. Pomegranate juice is also used to treat dysentery and cholera.

Dental care. The antibacterial and antiviral properties of the juice help to reduce the effects of dental plaque.

Osteoarthritis. Pomegranate minimises the ill-effects in problems like atherosclerosis and osteoarthritis. The loss that is triggered due

and more experts recommend this fruit as part of a healthy diet.

3. It helps to reduce the risk of getting atherosclerosis, osteoarthritis and diabetes.

4. Pomegranate is a good, natural source of the vitamins A, C and E as well as folic acid.

5. If pomegranate juice is taken by expectant mothers, it is supposed to improve the birth weight of babies.

6. It is prized in some countries because it is believed to help in

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to the thickening and solidifying of cartilage and joints can be cured by consuming this fruit.

Diabetes. Consuming pomegranate fruit juice can prevent a diabetic patient from developing coronary illnesses.

An immunity-builder. The consumption of pomegranate oil has been proven beneficial to the immune system. According to a study conducted by the Department of Biochemistry at Miyazaki University in Japan, pomegranate seed oil can improve the function of B-cells, which are a specific type of white blood cells that produce specific antibodies against specific antigens. By increasing the functions of B-cells, the entire function of the immune system is boosted.

A rich source of vitamin C. Pomegranates are a rich source of vitamin C. The vitamin forms a coating around body cells that protects

them from viruses, boosting your immune system and keeping you healthy. Vitamin C is found in many fruits and vegetables, but getting it from pomegranates and pomegranate extracts gives you all of the other benefits associated with the fruit. One whole pomegranate has 40 per cent of the recommended vitamin C dosage, but the oil has a reduced amount.

More oxygen. Recent studies reveal that eating pomegranate seeds and drinking pomegranate juice can increase oxygen levels, which means your blood will be better oxygenated—and you will be healthier.

Other advantages of pomegranate

With the passage of time, more and more people have started acknowledging the importance of consuming pomegranates. Other






advantages include reducing the likelihood of having premature babies. Pomegranate seed extract also reduces the likelihood of getting Alzheimer's disease among the elderly. The pomegranate fruit juice is also known to be very helpful in treating issues of erectile dysfunctions. It is a good natural aphrodisiac, and improves sperm count and semen quality.

The astringent features of the flower juice, rind and tree bark are considered valuable for a wide range of purposes, such as stopping nose bleeds and gum bleeds, toning skin (after mixing with mustard oil) and treating hemorrhoids. Pomegranate seeds (of specific fruit strains) are also used as eye drops, as they are believed to slow the development of cataracts.

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