



POMEGRANATE: A TIME-HONORED ELIXIR IN TRADITIONAL MEDICINE

*¹Lusiana Moirangthem, ²Vijay Bahadur, ³Saket Mishra ⁴Shashi Kant Ekka

INTRODUCTION

Punica granatum L. (Pomegranate) is a well-known member of Punicaceae family. It is widely cultivated throughout Central Asia, the Himalayas, Middle East, American Southwest, and Mediterranean area and is believed to originate from Iran and Afghanistan. The pomegranate tree is a long-living tree that can typically grow up to 12 to 16 feet and live over 200 years. The pomegranate fruit is grenade-shaped with a deep red, leathery skin and crown-shaped calyx. The seeds are surrounded by a small amount of tart and red juice and are separated via white, membranous pericarp.

The pomegranate is a fruit that has long captured the imagination of civilizations throughout history. Revered for its tantalizing blend of sweet and tangy flavors, as well as its vibrant and jewel-like appearance, the pomegranate stands as a true monarch among

fruits. Pomegranate, a Chinese medicinal plant, has anti-inflammatory, antioxidant, antibacterial, and antiviral properties, and plays roles in lipid regulation and immunomodulation. (Wang et al., 2010).

The pomegranate's role in traditional medicine is a testament to the deep-rooted wisdom of our ancestors, who harnessed the fruit's innate powers for the betterment of human health and well-being. In this article, we will embark on a journey to explore the multifaceted aspects of pomegranate in traditional medicine. We will delve into the historical roots of its use, the diverse remedies it has inspired, and the scientific insights that continue to affirm its place in the world of holistic healing.

CHEMICAL CONSTITUENTS:

Icosanoic, Linolenic (Conjugated, Linolenic (Alpha, Oleic, Palmitic-, Punicic, Stearic acid.citric acid ,Malic acid was the

*¹Lusiana Moirangthem, ²Vijay Bahadur, ³Saket Mishra ⁴Shashi Kant Ekka

¹M.Sc. (Hort.) Fruit Science, Department of Horticulture, Sam Higginbottom University of Agriculture Technology and Sciences. Naini, Prayagraj.

²Associate Professor, Department of Horticulture, Sam Higginbottom University of Agriculture Technology and Sciences. Naini, Prayagraj.

³Assistant Professor, Department of Horticulture, Sam Higginbottom University of Agriculture Technology and Sciences. Naini, Prayagraj.

⁴ Research Scholar, Department of Horticulture, Sam Higginbottom University of Agriculture Technology and Sciences. Naini, Prayagraj.

second most abundant. Phenolic compounds like gallic acid, protocatechuic acid, chlorogenic acid, caffeic acid, ferulic acid, o – and p -coumaric acids, catechin, phloridzin and quercetin

BIOLOGICAL PROPERTIES AND THERAPEUTIC APPLICATIONS

A large number of articles concerning antimicrobial, antioxidant, anti-inflammatory, anticancer and immune suppressive activities of pomegranate in the period of 2009 to 2010 (October) were found.

The pomegranate fruit peel extract, mainly 80% methanolic, has been found to be a potent inhibitor of *Listeria monocytogenes*, *Staphylococcus aureus*, *Escherichia coli*, and *Yersinia enterocolitica*. It also inhibited food-borne viral infectivity and influenza virus, which is a human-caused disease. The pomegranate extract, including Punicalagin, showed virucidal capability and inhibited influenza virus RNA proliferation independently of its virucidal effect.

TRADITIONAL USES OF POMEGRANATES

- a. **Heart Problems:** Frequent intake of pomegranate juice can maintain good flow of the blood in the body. Along with this, it decreases the risk of heart attack and heart strokes.
- b. **Stomach Disorder:** Pomegranates peel, bark and leaves are used to calm the

stomach disorder or diarrhea triggered due to any kind of digestive problems. Drinking tea made from the leaves of this fruit helps in curing digestive problems. Pomegranate juice is also used for handling problems of dysentery and cholera.

- c. **Dental Care:** The best benefit of pomegranate is that its juice, along with its antibacterial and antiviral properties, helps to reduce the effects of dental plaque.

- d. **Cancer:** Pomegranates consist of advanced level of antioxidants called flavonoids. These flavonoids are thought to be effective in counteracting various cancer radicals. The individuals that face high risk of prostate and breast cancer should start drinking the juice of this fruit, as this will help them to reduce further risk of developing cancer. Regular consumption of pomegranates can reduce the PSA levels in the body and helps to fight the existing cancer cells in the body.

- e. **Osteoarthritis:** Pomegranate minimizes the illness triggered in various forms, like atherosclerosis and osteoarthritis. The loss that is triggered due to the thickening and solidifying of the arterial walls and in cartilage and joints can be cured by consuming this fruit. Also, pomegranate is capable of preventing the creation of

minerals that are liable for breaking down the connective tissues.

- f. **Diabetes:** Consuming of pomegranate fruit juice by a diabetic patient can prevent coronary illnesses. Along with this, there is a slowdown in solidifying of the bloodstream, which can fuel non-occurrence of various heart diseases.
- g. **Anemia:** Healthy blood flow can be maintained in the body by consuming this fruit in any form. Pomegranate seed extract supplies iron to blood and thus, help to decrease the anemic symptoms including fatigue, wooziness and weakness and hear loss.

MEDICINAL USES OF PUNICA GRANATUM(POMEGRANATE)

Pomegranate fruit juice is known as a delicacy and is made into excellent sherbet with the addition of water, sugar and taken internally, and some people use it in preparing ice-creams, jellies and marmalades. Such juice of pomegranate fruits possesses diuretic, cooling effect, glucose, fructose, tannins, oxalic acid, and reduces thirst in cases of fevers, supplies the required minerals and helps the liver to preserve vitamin A. from the food, increases the body's resistance to T.B infection, and acts as a tonic for heart and kidney. According to Indian Herbal System, all parts of pomegranate including roots,

leaves, flowers, rind, seeds and the reddish brown bark are used medicinally.

1. **For bleeding piles;** the bark decoction is very effective, and if combined with Holarrhena's bark with a sip of honey it treats blood motions.
2. **For threatened abortion;** pomegranate leaves, sandal wood powder, curd and a sip of honey are useful.
3. **For gum bleeding and bleeding of the teeth;** the fruit rind powder mixed with black pepper, common salt, and applied. Such preparation whitens teeth, strengthens gum and said to prevent pyorrhea.
4. **For urinary calculus;** a teaspoonful of ground seeds along with a cup of gram soup taken internally
5. **For diarrhea, dysentery, nose bleeding, prolapsed rectum, leucorrhea, etc.;** powdered dried rind with fenugreek decoction and a sip of honey are beneficial. The flower bud can also be snuffed in case nose bleeding.
6. **For conjunctivitis;** a paste of the leaves is applied on the red part of the eye. This is also beneficial in healing scabies, eczema, itchiness and ringworm.

7. It has immuno-stimulatory, anti-oxidant, anti-inflammatory anti-diabetic and anticancer. It is widely used in treating certain types of cancer including leukemia, breast, prostate and colon cancer, dysentery, diarrhea, excessive bleeding, intestinal worms and parasites

POMEGRANATE NUTRITION

Fresh pomegranate is a source of fiber, which can promote weight loss, lower cholesterol, and ease constipation.

Nutrients per serving

Half of a pomegranate, which equals one serving, contains:

Calories: 72

Protein: 2.35 grams

Fat: 1.6 grams

Carbohydrates: 26 grams

Fiber: 5.5 grams

Sugar: 20 grams

While pomegranates lose much of their vitamin C content when juiced, they retain nearly all of their potassium, about 536 mg. Potassium is an important mineral that helps your nerves and heart stay strong. Enjoying fresh pomegranates or their juice gives you plenty of this key mineral.

Some pomegranate-flavored drinks have more calories because they contain more sugar than plain pomegranate juice. To get the health benefits of pomegranates without the

extra calories, look for bottles that say “100% juice.”

POTENTIAL RISKS OF POMEGRANATE AND POMEGRANATE JUICE

Pomegranates are typically safe to eat. But some people may get unwanted side effects. An allergic reaction to pomegranate is rare but can happen. If we have an allergy to plants, watch for possible symptoms, which can include hives or troubled breathing.

Pomegranate can also interact with some drugs and medications. We may want to check with

our doctor or limit our consumption of pomegranate if we're taking such medications

as:

1. ACE inhibitors or other drugs for high blood pressure

2. Crestor and other drugs for high cholesterol that can break down in your liver

3. Blood thinners such as warfarin (Coumadin)

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