

A photograph of two pomegranates. One is whole and red, and the other is cut open, revealing the bright red, juicy seeds inside. Green leaves are attached to the stems. A semi-transparent green banner is overlaid across the middle of the image, containing the word 'Pomegranate' in white text.

Pomegranate

Health Benefits of Pomegranates

Crunchy and delicious pomegranate seeds contain compounds that lower blood pressure, cholesterol, inflammation and fight cancer.

1/2 cup pomegranate seeds provides:

- 72 Calories, 1.5 gm protein, 1 gm fat, 3.5 gm fiber, no cholesterol

Potential benefits of consuming pomegranate seeds:

- Polyphenol antioxidants are anti-inflammatory and anti-cancer. They help cholesterol from oxidizing, reducing plaque formation and risk of heart disease and stroke
- Rich in vitamin C, seeds contain flavonoids, anthocyanins, punicalic acid, ellagitannins, alkaloids and fiber which work together to lower risk for multiple chronic disease states
- 1/2 cup seeds provides 18% of daily vitamin K requirement for blood clotting, wound-healing and bone metabolism, and 14% of daily potassium for healthy nerve transmission and blood pressure
- Seeds are easy to use. Toss into fruit or green salads, oatmeal or smoothies. Mix with steamed vegetables or rice. Use juice to make syrup or sorbet. Dehydrate juice for fruit leather

For more Healthy Bytes Initiative information, visit:
www.advancedhealth.com/healthy-bytes-initiative

Brought to you by Oregon State University Extension
Family & Community Health and Advanced Health



Health Benefits of Pomegranates



The pomegranate is an ancient fruit cultivated in arid and semi-arid zones like India, Turkey, Spain, California and Arizona. It is one of the oldest cultivated fruits, dating along with the olive, grape and fig. In many religions, the pomegranate symbolizes luck, abundance and fertility.

The fruit, categorized as a fleshy berry, has long been known for its numerous health benefits. The edible portion of the berry is the seeds which are separated into chambers giving the fruit its unique hexagon shape.

WHAT MAKES POMEGRANATE SEEDS GREAT?

Nutrition

1/2 cup pomegranate seeds provides 72 Calories, 1.5 gm protein, 3.5 gm fiber, 1 gm fat, no cholesterol. The seeds contain protein, vitamins, minerals, fiber and healthy oils.

Antioxidants

Pomegranates are renown for their high antioxidant capacity, mostly from vitamin C and polyphenols including tannins and flavonoids. Anthocyanins, a flavonoid which contributes to the red color of the seeds and juice has been shown to lower inflammation.

Pomegranates are high in vitamin K, responsible for blood clotting and bone metabolism. This vitamin is present in many body tissues including the brain, heart, liver and pancreas and is required for the synthesis of proteins.

Pomegranate seeds and juice fight disease

Studies indicate consumption of pomegranate fruit can inhibit cancer cell growth. This has been shown with numerous cancers including prostate, breast, lung, colon and skin cancers.

The antioxidant properties have been shown to lower blood pressure, reduce development of arterial plaque and lower inflammation, all of which contribute to lower risk for heart disease and stroke. The oil in pomegranate seeds has been shown to reduce total triglycerides and cholesterol.

Pomegranates are also helpful for lowering blood pressure

and reducing symptoms of pain and bone erosion associated with rheumatoid arthritis.

Some studies show pomegranates have antimicrobial and anti-fungal properties and can fight E.coli, MRSA and staph infections. Compounds in rinds have been used to treat malaria and HIV.

Fiber

One important health effect is that compounds like ellagic acid act as food (prebiotic) for our healthy gut microbiota. These microbes produce short chain fatty acids (SCFAs) like acetate, propionate and butyrate, which support our immunity, fight depression, dementia, and obesity.

SCFAs have also been shown to relieve symptoms of inflammatory bowel disease, control appetite and induce restful sleep.

BUYING & USING POMEGRANATE SEEDS

Pomegranates can be found in most grocery stores usually between September and December. Seek out large, heavy fruits which indicate juiciness. Rind colors range from yellow, purple, pink to brick red, the most common. Color indicates variety and not ripeness. Ripe pomegranates should have shiny rinds without cracks.

During the off growing season, other forms are available such as bottled juice, jams, jellies, vinegars and capsules of dried extracts. *Anardana* is the powdered form of pomegranate seed often used as a spice.



**Oregon State
University**

stephanie.polizzi@oregonstate.edu

631 Alder Street, Myrtle Point, OR 97458

541-572-5263 ext 25291

<https://extension.oregonstate.edu/coos/healthy-families-communities>

The rinds of pomegranates are inedible. The white interior membranes, although edible and nutritious, are usually bitter to the taste.

Toss pomegranate seeds into oatmeal, green or fruit salads, with veggies, rice or pasta. Substitute pomegranate seeds for tomatoes in tabouleh or sprinkle as a garnish in soups, sides or main dishes. Use juice to make syrup or sorbet, or dehydrate to make fruit leather. Consider adding pomegranate seeds to cranberry relish or green bean casserole this holiday season.

HOW TO REMOVE POMEGRANATE SEEDS

If you've never tried it, removing the seeds of a pomegranate can seem intimidating. Here are 2 simple ways to remove seeds easily. You will want to be sure to also remove the white membrane around the seeds. Be prepared since both methods can get messy.

Method 1

Cut pomegranate in half around the middle. Hold it over a bowl with open side down and hit the skin with a wooden spoon. Separate the seeds from the white membrane.

Method 2 (seen in photo right)

Using a paring knife, remove the stem at the top. Then score the sides cutting between the ridges being careful not to cut too deep. With your thumbs in the stem area, pull apart the sections and peel off the white membrane. Pull the edges of the skin back releasing the seeds.



Pomegranate Sorbet

theviewfromgreatisland.com

Ingredients:

2 cups Pomegranate juice
2/3 cup sugar

Directions:

1. Add sugar to juice, stirring until all sugar crystals have dissolved completely.
2. Pour into a gallon-sized zip baggie and seal tight.
3. Lay the bag flat on a baking sheet or platter and place in freezer. Freeze 2 hours or until solid.
4. When frozen, remove and break into chunks. Put chunks into blender or food processor and blend until smooth, rearranging chunks if necessary.
5. When the sorbet is smooth, spread it in metal loaf pan. Cover with foil and put back in freezer until firm.
6. Scoop frozen sorbet into a bowl and serve with a sprig of mint.

Pomegranate Guacamole

Afoodcentriclife.com

Ingredients:

2 ripe avocados
1/2 cup pomegranate seeds
1-2 Tbsp fresh cilantro, chopped
2 tsp green onion or shallot, finely chopped
1-2 Tbsp fresh lime juice
Salt and pepper to taste

Directions:

1. Slice, peel and dice the avocado. Place in medium bowl and mash until desired consistency.
2. Add pomegranate seeds and remaining ingredients and gently stir.
3. Serve chilled with cucumber slices, chips or on a bed of lettuce cups.

REFERENCES

Infogrocery.com
Nutritiondata.self.com
Nutritionvalue.org
<https://ods.od.nih.gov/factsheets>