Pomegranates
Health Benefits of Pomegranates
Jill A. Taufer, RD, LD/N
Extension Agent
Family Nutrition Program
Health Benefits

• 2000 years ago the people of the Mediterranean used various parts of the pomegranate to treat a variety of ailments.
Nutritional Value

• One medium pomegranate contains:
  – 100 calories
  – 26 grams of carbohydrate

• Excellent source of: Vitamin C and K

• Good source of: fiber, potassium, thiamin, folate, manganese and copper
Fruit vs. Juice
Phytochemicals

- Compounds produced by plants
- 122 have been identified in the pomegranate
- Phytochemicals work together to protect cells
  - Anti-aging
  - Anti-inflammation
  - Antioxidant
Antioxidants

• Many of the phytochemicals in pomegranates act as antioxidants
• Antioxidants neutralizes free radicals to prevent cell damage
• Oxidation is very destructive and over time could be a pathway for cancer, heart disease and aging
Which has the highest amount of antioxidant power

- Pomegranate juice
- Red wine
- Concord grape juice
- Blueberry juice
- Black cherry juice
- Açai juice
- Cranberry juice
- Orange juice
- Tea
- Apple Juice

*Journal of Agricultural and Food Chemistry. 2008*
USDA ORAC [see note below] Chart
Heart Health

• Rich antioxidant content decreases inflammation and thickening of the artery walls
• May reduce buildup of plaque
• Reduction in blood cholesterol and blood pressure

Nutrition Reviews 2009; 67: 49-56
Cancer

• Promotes cancer cell death
• Decrease cancer cell proliferation
• Inhibits enzymes implicated in cancer development
• Slows migration of cancer cells

Precaution

• According to the National Institutes of Health, pomegranate juice may cause “moderate” interaction with certain drugs.

Some examples:
• Cholesterol lowering drugs
• Anticoagulants
• Medications for high blood pressure
Other health benefits being studied

- Anti-microbial
- Anti-inflammatory (arthritis)
- Anti-cancer
- Anti-diabetic
Enjoying Pomegranamates

Pomegranate Cooler

1 ½ C pomegranate juice
3 C seltzer water
¼ C fresh lemon juice
Add fresh mint
Conclusion

- Pomegranates are one of the most antioxidant rich fruits
- More research
- Variety! Eat a rainbow of colorful foods
- Choose whole foods
- Enjoy pomegranates
Ripe Pomegranate

Pomegranates stop ripening when picked but develop flavor in storage.

Ripe fruit
- Soft outer skin that can be scratched under gentle pressure
- Sides become flattened and skin turns deep red shade
- Makes metallic sound when tapped
Selection

Weighty for size

Taut, glossy, unbroken skin
Tips for Storage

**Fresh** – keep in cool, dry, well-ventilated space
- Refrigerated whole – 2 months
- Fresh seeds – refrigerated 5 days
- Arils can be frozen – up to one year

**Juice** – canned or frozen for later use
- Best if use within one year
Fruit Uses

Edible portion – Arils (seed and juice-filled sac that cover them)
• Garnishes
• Snacks

Juice
• Jellies, puddings, desserts, and drinks
• Grenadine (syrups)
Other Uses

• **Peeled** tooth powders, toothpastes, facial care products, coughing remedies, supplement in cow feed

• **Trunk Bark**: tannins used to cure leather, making insecticides, alkaloids are active against tapeworms

• **Rind and Flowers**: dyes for textiles, used to reduce oral and throat inflammation
Other Uses continued

• **Buds**: treat bronchitis

• **Leaves**: mixed with vinegar to make ink

• **Fruit**: used in ornamental decorations, extracts used as astringents

• **Wood**: used for walking sticks and in woodcrafts