Pomegranates

Health Benefits and Other Uses
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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
Phytochemicals

• Compounds produced by plants
• 122 have been identified in the pomegranate
• Phytochemicals work together to protect cells
  – Anti-aging
  – Anti-inflammation
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
- Açaí juice
- Cranberry juice
- Orange juice
- Tea
- Apple Juice

*Journal of Agricultural and Food Chemistry. 2008*
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
Other health benefits being studied

• Anti-microbial
• Anti-inflammatory (arthritis)
• Anti-cancer
• Anti-diabetic
Ripe Pomegranate

**Pomegranate** stops ripening when picked but develops 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

• **Peels:** 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