

Finger millet

Finger millet is **an excellent source of natural calcium which helps in strengthening bones for growing children and aging people.** Regular consumption of finger millet is good for bone health and keeps diseases such as osteoporosis at bay and could reduce risk of fracture. Finger Millet is commonly known as Ragi.

Nutritional Value of Finger Millet:

Finger millet is well recognized because it is rich in calcium, protein, magnesium, iron, phosphorous, vitamins, dietary fiber, and zinc. It contains 364 mg Calcium, 7.2 g protein, 146 mg magnesium, 4.6 mg iron, 2.5 mg zinc, and 11.2 gm dietary fiber per 100 gram of Finger Millet grains. The seed coat is also a rich source of phenolic compounds, minerals, and dietary fiber.

Benefits of Finger Millet:

Control Diabetes

Regular consumption of ragi helps to reduce the risk of diabetes because this millet has a high level of polyphenols and dietary fiber. When compared to the wheat, rice, or any other grain, this finger millet has a high amount of fiber.

The high amount of fiber in the finger millet helps to slow down the digestion speed, which helps to lower the blood sugar level.

It also helps to lower the GI so that it is an ideal choice to avoid late-night food cravings and helps to maintain the blood sugar level in the safest range.

Reduce the Risk of Anemia

Finger millet is a great source of iron so that it is a boon for the anemia patients and the person who has a low hemoglobin level.

Once consuming the finger millet, it increases Vitamin C in our body, and it helps to the easy absorption of iron in the bloodstream. For the optimum absorption of iron, you can eat this finger millet in the form of balls or dosa with vegetables.

Prevent Skin Aging

The finger millet is not only maintaining the proper health, and also it helps to keep you young and vitality of the skin. The finger millet has a high amount of antioxidants and phenolic, which helps to block premature aging.

It is used as the most efficient anti-aging natural drink. The essential methionine, amino acid, and lysine are present in this cereal; it helps to maintain the collagen in the skin.

The collagen is the substance that supports the skin tissues to make the skin lively, and it helps to make them less sagging and prone to wrinkles.

Anti-cancer Property

Nowadays, antioxidants are becoming more essential to maintain health. The finger millet is rich in the antioxidant properties; it helps to prevent excess oxidation. It may cause aging and cancer because of cell damages.

The finger millet seed coats have the flavonoids, phenolic acid, and tannins, which is more important for the antioxidant property.

Usually, the people in the millet-based diet use finger millet rather than the maize or wheat diets to reduce the possibilities of esophageal cancer.

Improve Bone Health

Finger millets have a good source of calcium, and it helps to join the bones. Calcium is essential nutrition for the aging person and growing children.

Consuming the finger millet helps to the bone development of growing children, and it helps to maintain bone strength in

adults. Consuming the finger millet also helps to keep away the ailments, such as osteoporosis and reduce the risk of bone fracture.

Consuming the finger millet as a healthy drink in summer days will provide the strength and cooling effect on our body.

Increase Lactation

Finger millet has excellent nutrition for the new mothers, which helps to improve the hemoglobin levels. Nutritionists recommended lactating mothers to consume finger millet in their daily diet that helps increase milk production.

The finger millet has also fertilized the milk with the essential minerals, such as calcium, iron, and vital amino acids that helps to improve the child's and mother's health.

Helps Digestion

The finger millet has a rich amount of dietary fiber that helps the normal bowel function, proper digestion, and it prevents constipation.

The insoluble fiber in the finger millet aids the movement of food through the intestines, as well as, the insoluble fiber keeps the water for the easy passage of the waste.

Adding this finger millet in your daily diet will help the proper digestive system, and it reduces the risk of constipation and other digestive problems.

Relaxes the body

Regularly consuming the finger millet is extremely beneficial and it is dealing with depression, anxiety, and insomnia conditions.

The amino acid and tryptophan are the main component for the antioxidant property that helps the natural body relaxation. A study conducted by Medindia in 2000 proves that the finger millet also helps to treat migraines.

Reduce bad cholesterol

Finger millets are a wonderful grain for bringing down the bad cholesterol level in our blood; it is one of the best home remedies for a healthy heart.

It will control the bad cholesterol level by reducing the formation of plaque; it prevents the blockage of blood vessels and reduces the risk of stroke and other heart problems.

The lecithin, amino acid, and methionine of the finger millet play a key role in lowering the cholesterol, and it extracts the excess amount of fat from the liver.

The threonine and amino acid in the finger millet helps to avoid the formation of fat in the liver. The unripe green finger millet also helps to control hypertension and high blood pressure.

Helps in Weight Loss

The finger millet has a high amount of dietary fiber, which helps to make your stomach full for a long time and prevent unwanted craving. It helps to reduce appetite and weight loss.

The finger millet flour helps to maintain the insulin level so that it reduces the blood sugar level in the body. Consuming the finger millet in the morning time will make you full for the whole day.

Perfect for a gluten-free diet

The finger millet is a gluten-free grain so that it is a suitable choice for the people who have celiac disease and also those who are following the gluten-free diet. Gluten is a protein that is commonly available in grains, such as barley, wheat, and rye.

The people who have gluten intolerance or celiac disease should avoid these grains because it triggers harmful digestive symptoms like nutrient malabsorption and diarrhea. When you are going to purchase the millet, you have to check the label to ensure it is gluten-free.

Antimicrobial Property

Some researches prove that the finger millet is an act against a lot of bacterias, such as bacillus cereus, which causes food poisoning.

The salmonella bacteria is caused by typhoid, and the staphylococcus aureus bacteria primarily cause some skin and soft tissue infections, such as furuncles, abscesses, and cellulitis. The antimicrobial property of the finger millet helps to fight against these bacterias.

Boost function of Nerves System

Consuming the finger millet in your daily diet will help to enhance the nerve impulse conduction, relaxes the mind, and activates the memory centers in the brain by elevating the amino acid tryptophan level.

The tryptophan of the finger millet helps to equalize the serotonin in the neurotransmitter. Ragi helps to treat insomnia and anxiety for maintaining a good mood and promotes peaceful sleeping.

Healthy Finger Millet Recipes:

Despite the many health benefits of Finger Millet, still, it has not been embraced and included in the diet. No doubt, the importance of finger millet is felt in Southern India and it has become their regular diet.

1. Millet Laddu

Ingredients:

- 1 cup Ragi Flour
- 1 cup roasted peanuts
- 1 cup raisins
- 1 cup dates (without seeds)
- 4-5 cardamon (Grind to powder)
- 10 black pepper (Grind to powder)

Preparation for Laddu:

1. Roast the ragi flour slightly on a low flame and keep it aside to cool down.

2. Put all the ingredients in a grinder except ragi flour and give a 4-5 pulse. Don't worry if small pieces are left out.
3. Next, put the ragi flour into the grinder and give 2 pulses.
4. Transfer all the ingredients to a bowl or a plate and make a good dough with your hands.
5. Roll it into round balls.
6. Keep it in an airtight container and enjoy it.

2. Finger Millet Malt:

It's a very quick and easy-to-make recipe. Only thing is to make the ragi flour earlier. For making sprouted Finger Millet, you need to follow few steps:

- Soak the Finger Millet grains in sufficient water overnight.
- Germinate them by tying them in a cloth for 2-3 days.
- Dry the germinated grains under the sun.
- Remove the sprouts.
- Grind them into fine powder.

Preparation of Malt:

- Take 3-4 tbsp of ragi malted flour and mix it with little water.
- Boil 1 cup of water.
- Put the ragi paste into it.
- Cook for 2-3 minutes.

- Add salt as per taste.
- Cool it and you can add Jaggerry and curd.