

The Power of Pomegranates

This ancient, crimson-red fruit packs a powerful punch. Pomegranates are rich in antioxidants and more!

Rich in nutrients including powerful antioxidants, these crimson-red fruits can add sweetness, tanginess and crunch to everything from salads and smoothies to sauces and casseroles. Not only are they a delicious, colorful, low in fat, and high in fiber, but research continues to demonstrate increasing health benefits in these once largely ornamental fruits.

Even today, only approximately 5% of our population has ever tasted pomegranates. However, pomegranates are an ancient fruit first introduced from abroad into the U.S. in 1769.

Pomegranates have gained recent attention because of their high levels of antioxidants, higher even than red wine and blueberries. Antioxidants help fix free radical damage that occurs in the body due to exposure to environmental factors like pollution and the sun's UV rays, and lifestyle factors like smoking, high intensity exercise and other normal metabolic functions.

Pomegranates contain polyphenols (plant nutrients) in large amounts. Preliminary research suggests that these nutrients may reduce blood pressure and heart disease risk by their ability to act as antioxidants and also by inhibiting the activity of an enzyme that raises blood pressure.

One-half cup of edible pomegranate contains only 70 calories, is a good source of fiber, potassium and vitamin C, and has less than 1 gram of fat. In addition, they are rich in many health-promoting plant nutrients. Researchers continue to investigate and discover the pomegranate's many nutrients.

Pomegranates can be tricky to eat because of the work involved in peeling the skin. However, they're well worth the effort, and increasingly you can find ready-to-eat pomegranates in the produce section, in food products, and in bottled juices.

References:

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