

INDIAN SUPER-FOODS



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Designation ????

Super-foods are plant based foods that consist of vitamins and minerals that can fight against diseases. They help us to have a healthier and longer life. Super-foods have the elements of both food and medicine. They are a class of the most potent, super-concentrated and nutrient-rich foods on the planet. Extremely tasty and satisfying, they have the ability to tremendously increase the force and energy of one's body.

We know that food is the most important source of energy for our body. However, in today's world, fruits and vegetables are fast becoming GMO (Genetically modified organisms.) They are pumped full of toxins and pesticides. These go into our body and cause various ailments and diseases. To avoid this, it is best to buy organic, even if it seems a little heavier on our pocket. Raw organic food is superior in vitamin content, enzymes, co-enzymes, protein, minerals, glycol-nutrients, and many other elements of nutrition.. Due to the depletion of nutrients in conventional foods, we have continued to turn towards new possibilities for whole and balanced nutrition. And including some super-foods into our diet makes this extremely easy. Super-foods should be consumed in raw and organic form, as our body is able to receive more nutrition from them when they are ingested in their raw form.

Super-foods are a major focal point of nutrition because they not only help nourish the brain, bones, muscles, skin, hair, nails, heart, lungs, liver, kidneys, reproductive systems, pancreas, and immune system, they also, over the long term, correct imbalances and help to guide us towards a more natural diet.

When it comes to healthy eating today, kale, blueberries, acai berries and quinoa are the known nutritional trendsetters. The conventional Indian super-foods may not be as well-known. We consume these as part of our daily diet, without realizing that these actually give us all the nutrition that we look for in International Super-foods. How many of us pay any real heed to the humble drumstick, those little puffy makhana (lotus seeds) or even infamously pungent jackfruit? However, these local victuals pack quite the potent punch when incorporated into your diet.

Makhana: 'Makhana' or the popped seeds of the lotus plant, or the fox / gorgon nut are a potent source of protein, carbohydrates, fibre, magnesium, potassium, phosphorous (phew!!!), iron and zinc. These unpretentious seeds that look more like light cotton puffs are also low in fat and sodium. Their magnesium content makes them useful for those suffering from heart disease, high blood pressure, diabetes and obesity. If that wasn't enough, these lotus seeds are also known to contain an anti-ageing enzyme which helps in repairing damaged proteins. So the next time you feel hungry, instead of that fancy -- read expensive -- pack of garden nuts, choose this desi nutrient.

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Drumsticks: If you've spooned your way through enough South Indian thalis and bowls of sambhar you're already familiar with this fibrous vegetable. It comes from what is known as the "Miracle Tree", "Tree of Life", or more prosaically, the Moringa Oleifera. This little genius has an enviable range of medicinal properties other than being power-packed with nutrients. The drumstick is a rich source of potassium, calcium, phosphorous, iron, magnesium, vitamins A,C and D, essential amino acids (hold on, hold on), fibre and antioxidants such as β-carotene and flavonoids. Studies the world-over have also shown that the phyto-chemicals and fibre present in Moringa Oleifera leaves also play an important role in reducing blood cholesterol and blood sugar levels (see for example here and here). Let's face it, the Indian tropical summer sun isn't the most appealing way to soak up some vitamin D. Instead just indulge in those sambhar-doused drumsticks - more drumsticks, less sambhar of course.

Jackfruit: People often turn up their noses at its pungent odour, but the jackfruit is a classic case of why first impressions should be forgone. Also known as the food of the

orangutans, the jackfruit is often termed as the Indian veggie substitute for meat: basically, when cooked, its texture resembles that of soft meat. Rich in protein and starch, calcium, vitamin A, B, C, copper and potassium, the jackfruit does stock up on carbohydrates (80%). However, this high rate can be ignored considering it possesses a low glycemic index owing to its high fibre (11%) and nature of starch. Let's look into this a bit more: high fibre content is an excellent digestive aid and the mucilaginous pulp helps boost your immune system too, not to mention its role in improving thyroid function, skin and vision. It also has anti-cancer benefits and lowers blood pressure.

Aloe Vera: Easy to grow, Aloe Vera is one of the most nutritious super-foods on the planet. It has the ability to not only heal the body internally, but also to heal wounds when applied externally. The gel of raw Aloe Vera contains vitamins A, C, and E, the minerals calcium, magnesium, zinc, selenium and chromium, as well as anti-oxidants, fiber, amino acids and enzymes.

Coconut: In Sanskrit, the coconut palm is known as Kalpa Vriksha, meaning "the tree that supplies all that is needed to live". No matter how much you have mistreated your body, fresh young coconut flesh, coconut water, coconut cream and coconut oil can save your life. Young coconut water is nearly identical to human blood plasma, which makes up 55% of human blood. Coconut in any form is beneficial for the immune system, improves digestion and absorption of vitamins and amino acids.

Wheatgrass: Wheatgrass is a potent source of a number of vital nutrients your body can't do without. Dozens of studies on wheatgrass - and also its individual antioxidants and nutrients - show that its health benefits include a healthy metabolism, an oxygenated and alkaline environment in the body, detoxifying and strengthening the blood, purifying the liver and reducing inflammation.



Other local alternatives to international food stars like chia, quinoa and kale that cost half the price and are twice as nice:

Indian Basil seeds vs. Chia Seeds

There's an actual reason why falooda is a summer drink. Basil seeds are famously known to cool our internal systems. Chia and Indian basil seeds aka sabja look and act alike and hail from

the mint family. High in fibre, chia seeds became popular world over as they can be used as an alternative to eggs while baking. Basil seeds are an easy source of vitamins, iron, helps control blood sugar levels and fight seasonal flus. They're also really good for your gut and can relieve constipation and bloating. Use them exactly as you would chia seeds, just remember that they have to be soaked and cannot be eaten as is.



Indian Moringa vs. Matcha powder

While it is a great source of carbohydrates, the Indian moringa provides a better nutritional profile when compared to matcha. Moringa has over 10 times more fibre, 30 times more protein and 100 times more calcium than its Japanese cousin. Moringa is as native as it can get. It's not just a superfood when powdered, but is actually a super tree with nutritional leaves, fruits, flowers and seeds. Do note, the flavour profiles are not the same-moringa has an asparagus aftertaste, while matcha is slightly sweeter. Moringa can also be used in its powdered form.



Indian Amaranth vs. Quinoa

Also known as Rajgira or Ramdana-which loosely translates to food of the Gods-it is considered one of the more important foods of India, as per Ayurveda. Calcium, zinc, iron and fibre-Amaranth scores higher than quinoa on these properties. Plus, it's so much more pocket friendly.

Indian Amla vs. Acai Berry

While acai berry is known for its anti-aging and weight loss properties, amla scores higher. Apart from the above, it also helps keeps our immune system strong, has 20 times more vitamin C and twice the power of antioxidants as compared to its Amazonian counterpart. Chawanprash is a prime example of the wonders of amla - known to improve mental functions, promote eye health and nourish our brains.



Buckwheat vs. Oats

Buckwheat aka kuttu is richer in magnesium and potassium as compared to oats. A good source of complete protein, buckwheat contains all eight amino acids and helps improve gut health and blood circulation in your system

Beetroot leaves vs. Kale

While it's true that the Vitamin A & Vitamin K in Kale leaves is considerably higher than most greens, it is not the healthiest. Beetroot greens that we normally throw away, is actually a high nutrition food that is waiting to be explored. Low in calories but high in Vitamin E, they're a great source for potassium as well.



Jamun vs. Goji Berry

Both berries known to be beneficial for diabetic patients and are predominantly grown in Asia. Goji berry comes from China, while Jamun aka Jamoon, Jambul or the Indian Blackberry has origins in India. Cheaper and easier to source, the Indian Jamun is an all rounder-it relives tiredness, throat pain, controls blood sugar levels and helps build stronger immunity. It contains healthy amounts of calcium, potassium, iron and Vitamin C.

It's time we shift our attention to these Indian Super-foods and make them a part of our regular diet. Simply find the ones you like and include them into your daily food, either as a smoothie, a salad dressing, the actual vegetable itself, or even in its powdered capsule form.

Prisim Healing Institute is the one and only dealer in Mumbai of this unique Breath Healing Program. You can avail of a trial session at Prisim Healing Institute. Email us at prisimmb@gmail.com for an appointment.

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Local regional Oils vs. Olive Oil

Coconut oil, for instance, has antimicrobial properties which keeps infections away, while virgin coconut oil converts bad cholesterol into good cholesterol. **Mustard oil** is rich in minerals while **peanut oil** has plenty of vitamin E and is free from cholesterol and transfats.

Ashwagandha vs. Chinese Ginseng

Chinese Ginseng has been touted for its ability to heal sexual dysfunction and is a popular ingredient world over. Its Indian equivalent, Ashwagandha, is found commonly in Rasayana-an Aryuvedic concoction which helps strengthen and heal the body. Ashwagandha is cheaper-it costs 1/3rd of Ginseng-and safer to consume for a long period of time.

Shatavari vs. Maca Root

Shatavari aka Satavar or Indian Asparagus is one of the most powerful rejuvenating herbs. Similar in nature and form, both superfoods have a reputation as a fertility enhancing plant. Research also shows that Shatavri can help with PMS, indigestion, heartburn, UTIs, irritable bowel syndrome and mood swings.

