

Kalonji- A remedy for all maladies except death

Abstract

Kalonji seeds are used as a flavoring agent in Indian and the Middle Eastern cooking and are also used in the preparation of ayurvedic formulations for the sake of disease treatment. Kalonji seeds and its extracted oil is found to be effective in the management and treatment of diseases like Obesity Constipation, Allergy, Hypertension, Cough, Heart Attack, Asthma, Cancer, Dermal Diseases, Headache, Toothache, Diabetes, Stomach Discomfort, Memory, Piles, Hair Loss, Dandruff, Burning Sensation etc. However over consumption of Kalonji might have few side effects such as slow blood clotting, liver damage and bleeding disorders.

Keywords: thymoquinone, ranunculaceae, xylose, rhamnase, nigellone, linoleic acid

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Introduction

Kalonji is acknowledged by different names such as Samal Fennel, Nigella, Mogrel, Kale Til, Black cumin etc and is native to Italy and Turkey.¹ It is an evergreen herb bearing blue flowers with black seeds and is largely consumed in diet in countries like Pakistan, Gulf countries, Bangladesh Middle-East and India.^{2,3} Scientifically Kalonji belongs to family Ranunculaceae and its seeds are deep black with bitter taste, used in culinary to enhance the flavour of cuisines.^{4,5} In addition it is an excellent treatment for many maladies such as cardiac problems, diabetes, dermal issues, dental problems, absent-mindedness, constipation, hypertension, allergies, cancer and pain.⁶⁻⁸

Alimentary significance of Kalonji

Kalonji seeds are known to contain approximately more than 100 therapeutic compounds such as proteins, 15 amino acids, glucose, xylose, rhamnase, arabinose, fiber, fats, and volatile/non - volatile oils, fatty acids, Oleic acid, Nigellone, Linoleic acid, Thymoquinone,

Vitamin A/B/B2/C, Niacin, Potassium Zinc, Calcium, sodium, Magnesium, Selenium and Iron.⁹⁻¹³ Medicinal potency of Kalonji is given in Table 1.¹⁴⁻³¹

Side effects if Kalonji consumed in excess

Causes skin allergic reactions such as toxic epidermal necrolysis and allergic contact dermatitis.^{32,33}

Slow down blood clotting and increase the risk of bleeding.³⁴

Kalonji oil if consumed in excess may damage your kidneys and liver.³⁵

It is recommended that pregnant women and breastfeeding women should not use Kalonji oil.³⁶

It is also recommended not to take Kalonji oil and its seeds before or after a surgery because it retards blood clotting and pose bleeding risk.³⁷

Table 1 Medicinal potency of Kalonji

S.no	Medical Benefits	Function
1	Enhancement of memory	Increase an individual intellectual level, memorizing ability, focus and treats brain associated diseases. ^{14,15}
2	Treatment of diabetes	Regulates normal sugar levels in the blood. ¹⁶
3	Promotes cardiac health	Control bad cholesterol level in the body to prevent arterial blockage to reduce the chances of heart stroke. ¹⁷
4	Relieve pain	Helps relieve joint pain, headaches, neck pain and back ache. ¹⁸
5	Treatment of obesity	It assists in loosening extra fat and thereby promote weight loss. ¹⁹
6	Treatment of numerous ailments	Kalonji is helpful in the treatment of constipation, cracked heels, cough and cold, fever, allergies, asthma rheumatoid arthritis, nasal congestion, itching, sneezing etc. ²⁰⁻²³
7	Improvement of the immune system	It boost our immune system and combats numerous bacterial and viral invasions. ²⁴
8	Treatment of skin problems	Treat pimples, acne, scars and blemishes. ²⁵
9	Treatment of hair problems	Treats dryness, hair fall, baldness and dandruff. ²⁶
10	Treatment of stomach discomforts	Treatment of improper digestion, chest irritation, abdominal pain, killing of round worm /tape worm in the stomach. ^{27,28}
11	Treatment of dental problems	Helps relieve problems like tooth pain, soreness, cavity, plaque, gums swelling/bleeding, premature tooth fall, gingivitis, teeth weakening and periodontitis. ²⁹⁻³¹

Conclusion

Kalonji is known to be the remedy for all the maladies except for death because of its immense therapeutic applications. It is found to be effective against diabetes, hypertension, allergies, asthma, headaches, digestive disorders, microbial infections and arthritis. Still research is being conducted to explore further about its bioactive phytocomponents and their respective medicinal applications.

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None.

Conflicts of interest

The author declares that there is no conflicts of interest.

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