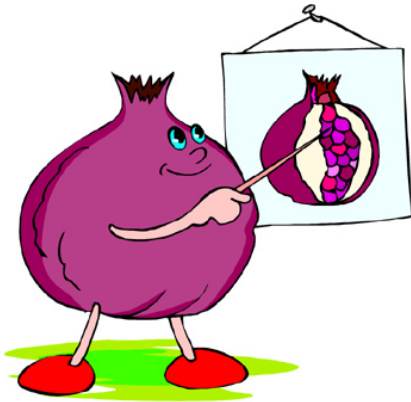


# OPTIMAL HEALTH UNIVERSITY™

Presented by Dr. Troy H. Peters

## Powerful Pomegranates

*It's difficult to pronounce and challenging to eat — but that hasn't stopped the humble pomegranate from becoming one of the most sought-after delicacies in the world. Or from being at the center of several new and exciting research discoveries! As part of our office's ongoing commitment to educate patients about late-breaking wellness research, Dr. Peters wants to share the following data on this ruby-hued nutritional jewel.*



“Reports of the pomegranate’s medicinal qualities have echoed throughout the millennia. Several Middle Eastern, Asian and South American peoples continue to chew small bits of its bark, petals and peel to treat ailments ranging from dysentery to diseases of the mouth and gums.” (*J Natl Cancer Inst* 2003;95:346-8.)

Peel a pomegranate open, and you’ll find a mass of red seeds nestled into a spongy, white membrane. The seeds are encased in little juice-filled pods known as *arils*. And pomegranates, whether plucked from a tree or your grocer’s produce aisle, are laden with powerful disease-fighting antioxidant chemicals.

But that’s just for starters. Dr. Peters wants patients to know that one medium apple-sized pomegranate — at a mere 100 calories — is packed with potassium (399 milligrams) and vita-

min C (9 milligrams). And its seeds are a valuable source of fiber.

Read on to get all the details about the powerful disease-fighting punch the pomegranate packs.

### Prevent Prostate Cancer

Research suggests that pomegranate juice may have a therapeutic effect on prostate cancer. It may also prevent the disease.

Using human prostate cancer cells, scientists at the University of Wisconsin showed that pomegranate fruit extract (PFE) possessed remarkable anti-tumor-promoting properties in mouse skin. The importance of this discovery is underscored by the fact that, as noted by the researchers, “prostate cancer is the most common invasive malignancy and the second leading cause of cancer-related deaths among U.S. males, with a similar trend in many Western countries.” (*Proc Natl Acad Sci USA* 2005;102:14813-8.)

### Combat Other Cancers

There are also a number of studies linking pomegranate fruit — along with distillations of its skin, seeds and oil — to the prevention of other cancers.

For instance, researchers in Japan found that pomegranate seed oil can suppress the formation of a cell type associated with colon cancer (*Cancer*

*Sci* 2004;95:481-6).

The seeds and seed oil of the pomegranate may also stave off breast cancer, according to the results of animal testing on mice (*Eur J Cancer Prev* 2004;13:345-8).

### Bolster Your Bones

As a holistic health-care professional, Dr. Peters coaches patients on all-natural alternatives to medication. And the pomegranate may prove to be such an alternative.

Scientists explain that pomegranates contain natural plant estrogens, which combat menopausal symptoms. Experiments in mice show that consuming pomegranate seeds and oil slows menopause-related bone loss (*J Ethnopharmacol* 2004;92:93-101).

Reduced bone strength leads to fractures, breaks and other musculoskeletal problems. Pomegranates — in addition to regular exercise and chiropractic care — keep bones strong without the potentially dangerous side effects of drugs.

### Help the Heart

For patients with chronic heart disease (CHD), daily consumption of pomegranate juice may improve stress-induced insufficient blood flow to the heart, a condition known as myocardial ischemia (*Am J Cardiol* 2005;96:810-4).



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Researchers from The Preventive Medicine Research Institute in Sausalito, Calif., divided a group of 45 CHD patients into two categories: Half drank 240 milliliters a day of pomegranate juice and half drank a placebo. After three months, the extent of stress-induced ischemia decreased in the pomegranate group but rose in the control group.

### **Diminish Diabetes' Effects**

In Unani medicine, the punica granatum flower (PGF) — the Latin name for the pomegranate's crowning glory — is a traditional anti-diabetic remedy for those with type 2 diabetes (*Toxicol Appl Pharmacol* 2005;207:160-9). Unani medicine, which originated in ancient Greece, aims to prevent disease by balancing the systems within the body.

Modern research confirms that PGF benefits the hearts of diabetics. Excess triglyceride (TG) accumulation in the heart and blood, along with elevated fatty acid (FA) oxidation in the heart, contributes to cardiac dysfunction in type 2 diabetics. In one study, researchers in Australia noted that long-term oral administration of PGF extract reduced cardiac TG content in addition to lowering plasma levels of TG and total cholesterol in rats bred to have diabetes (*Br J Pharmacol* 2005;145:767-74).

Another study found that concentrated pomegranate juice modifies heart disease risk factors for patients with high cholesterol levels, "and its inclusion therefore in their diets may be beneficial." (*J Med Food* 2004;7:305-8.)

### **Save Your Skin**

Oil from the pomegranate's seeds promotes the regeneration of damaged skin cells. That's what researchers from the University of Michigan's Medical School discovered when they conducted a number of tests comparing the fruit's oil with water-based solutions containing either its skin or fermented juice (*J Ethnopharmacol* 2005 Oct 8:Epub). This may mean fewer wrinkles and more radiant skin.

Animal studies also reveal that pomegranate-seed oil is a safe and effective

preventative agent against skin cancer (*J Med Food* 2003;6:157-61).

### **Accumulate Antioxidants**

When it comes to disease-fighting, all-natural antioxidants, pomegranates are No. 1. According to researchers in India, who studied a number of fruits, extracts of pomegranate peel "gave the maximum antioxidant activity." (*Int J Food Sci Nutr* 2004;55:511-16.)

Why do we need antioxidants like those provided by pomegranates? Because natural processes as well as environmental toxins create what's known as free radical chemicals, which cause us to "rust" (oxidize) from the inside out — sparking rapid aging and deterioration of cells and organs.

Free radicals also play an important role in the failure of wounds to heal. Antioxidants, on the other hand, promote healing (*Ann Plast Surg* 1997;39:516-23).

Oxidative damage is also related to the development of several diseases. Therefore, an improved antioxidant defense may — according to researchers in Norway — "protect against these diseases. Recent studies have demonstrated that dietary plants contain several hundred different antioxidants."

The same researchers further noted that fruits highest in antioxidants values include pomegranates, sour cherries, blackberries and blueberries. Among dried culinary herbs, the winners include oregano, sage, peppermint, garden thyme, lemon balm, clove, allspice and cinnamon (*Tidsskr Nor Laegeforen* 2004;124:1643-5).

### **Add an All-Natural Anti-Inflammatory**

Studies indicate that pomegranates quench inflammation — without the potentially harmful side effects associated with prescription and over-the-counter drugs.

### **Welcome This Winter Treat**

A large percentage of pomegranates are grown in California between Sep-

tember and January: making December a perfect time to incorporate bushels of this elegant delicacy into your diet. During the off season, enjoy many of the same health benefits by drinking pomegranate juice.

Whole pomegranates store well at room temperature for a week or refrigerated in an air-tight container for up to three months. Refrigerate seeds in an airtight bag for up to three days or freeze for up to six months (*Environmental Nutrition* 2002;25:8).

### **Select Based on Skin and Seeds**

You can't thump a pomegranate like a cantaloupe. Or peel its skin back like the husk on an ear of corn. But you can judge this scarlet-hued jewel by its skin. According to the folks at the Pomegranate Council (pomegranate.org), the skin should be thin, tough and unbroken.

Inside that leathery exterior, the pomegranate should have a minimal amount of white membranes and the seeds should be tender and edible.

Use care, however, when indulging in a pomegranate; its rich, colorful juice stains easily.

### **Discover This Delicious, Delightful Disease-Fighter**

In addition to being healthy, pomegranates are just plain fun to eat! And, unlike medication, there are no side effects associated with these disease-preventing delights. So peel back a pomegranate today, and enjoy everything this delicious fruit has to offer.

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