



Medical and Health Benefits of Drum Sticks (*Moringa oleifera*)

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Editorial

Moringa oleifera is graceful, small and deciduous tree with sparse foliage. During flowering season this plant closely resembles to leguminous species from distance. This tree grows up to height of 10-12mt and diameter of trunk is 45cm. bark is smooth, dark grayish in color and surrounded by thick cork. Young shoots have purple or green whitish hairy bark. This tree is deeply rooted with wide, open and typical umbrella shaped crown with tripinnate leaves. Leaflets are rounded-elliptical dark green above and pale from under surface. Flowers are produced throughout the year. Flowers of this plant are bisexual, fragrant and are surrounded by five unequal, thinly veined and yellow-whitish petals. Fruits are hanging, three sided brown capsules which holds numerous dark brown and globular seeds. Seeds contain three whitish papery wings and are dispersed by air and wind.

Habitat Shigru is basically native of India and wildly found in Sub Himalayan regions of northern India. Now it is grown in tropical and sub-tropical regions throughout world. It is also found in Ethiopia, Sudan, Philippines, West East and South America, tropical Asia, Florida and pacific island.

Classification

- I. Kingdom – Plantae
- II. Order – Brassicales
- III. Family – Moringaceae

Names

- I. Latin name – *Moringa oleifera*
- II. English name – Drumsticks, Moringa, Horse radish tree
- III. Hindi name – Shigru, Sahijjan, Munaga, Surjana phalli

Medicinal Uses

- **Helps in fighting cancer:** One of the most important medicinal benefits of *Moringa oleifera* lies in its high antioxidant content. Anti-oxidants work against the free radicals in the body helping in reducing oxidative stress and can also be highly effective to provide protection from cancer. Apart from a good dose of Vitamin C and Beta carotene which are both known for their potent anti-oxidant properties, drumsticks also contain quercetin and chlorogenic acid that can be helpful to provide protection against cancer and can also be effective to control irregular cell growth in the Reduce blood sugar levels
- **Reduce blood sugar levels:** Some clinical studies have found that consuming the leaves of drum sticks in particular amount might be actually effective in lowering the blood sugar levels. However, most of these studies are based on animals and the ones done on humans need further research. It is believed that the effects of the *Moringa oleifera* leaves to lower blood glucose levels come from the isothiocyanate content of the leaves.

- **Effective in lowering blood cholesterol levels:** There are some studies that have linked drum sticks with blood cholesterol reduction. Increased level of blood cholesterol is a major reason of heart ailments and heart attacks. Deposition of cholesterol in the arteries increases the pressure of blood within the arteries and increases the risk of heart attack. Consuming drum sticks might be helpful to reduce the blood cholesterol levels naturally.
- **Promotes bone health:** Drum sticks can be very helpful for stronger bones. They come with a good dose of calcium as well as iron and can be helpful to ensure better bone density. Calcium deficiency has also been related to other problems like degeneration of the teeth and including drum sticks in your diet can give protection from these problems due to their decent calcium and other mineral content.
- **Promotes healthy immunity:** Healthy immunity is the key to a healthy life. The high Vitamin C content of drumsticks supports the immunity system and strengthens it from within which can be most effective to stay away from the common cold and infections. Drum stick soup can also be helpful for fighting the common cold and flu due to the high vitamin C content. The soup is also believed to be effective to clear the congestion from the respiratory tract and can even be helpful to minimize the symptoms of asthma.
- **Treat digestive disorders:** Drumsticks have potent anti-bacterial properties and they can be effective in treating a number of digestive conditions. The ability of the juice of the drum stick leaves to promote better liver action makes it ideal for consumption for cholera, diarrhea and jaundice.
- **Helps in curing anemia:** Anemia or lack of blood in the body can affect the quality of life in the worst possible way. It can retard the normal growth in children and can cause a number of major problems like weakness, lack of focus and others in the grownups. Anemia is commonly treated with supplementary iron and one can get a good dose of iron by consuming drum sticks. So, for children as well as elderly, consuming drum sticks regularly can be helpful to stay away from anemia.
- **An ideal vegetable for pregnancy:** Anemia can be dangerous during pregnancy as it can hinder the normal growth of the fetus and is also directly related with the wellbeing of the expecting mother. Calcium is also vital for the formation of the skeletal system of the baby and in case of calcium deficiency in the body of the expecting mother loss in bone density of the mother can be observed, which can have serious negative impact on the mother. Drum Sticks are rich in iron and calcium content which ensures a good health of the baby and the expecting mother.
- **Enhances sexual health:** Drumsticks come with a good amount of zinc which has a vital role in the spermatogenesis. This mineral is also important for female fertility. The bark of the drum stick tree has been used in ancient medicine for treating problems like impotency and premature ejaculation in men.
- **Promotes better eyesight:** Being rich in Vitamin A, drum sticks naturally help in development of the visionary system and also in maintaining better eye sight. It can be helpful to provide protection against eye sight problems like night blindness. Vitamin A has also been found to reduce the risk of cataract and can even slow down the macular degeneration process.
- **Helps in treating anxiety:** *Moringa oleifera* has remarkable B vitamin content and these vitamins play a vital role in the brain in producing the feel good hormone. Moreover, these vitamins are known for boosting the cognitive abilities of the brain. They can also be effective in relaxing the nerves helping in relieving anxiety and tension. The ability of the B vitamins to relieve tension also makes it effective to promote better sleep.