



Utility of Papaya in Traditional Medicine for Its Immense Nutritional and Health Benefits: A Review

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Contents

1. Introduction	88
2. Conclusion	89
3. References	89

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Abstract

The papaya fruit is very common in Asian continent for its wide culinary and medicinal uses. The raw papaya is cooked as vegetable, while the ripe one is served in salads as fruit. It has a characteristic aroma and deliciously sweet and tender to taste. The present article discusses on its potentiality for use in folk and traditional Asian and African medicine as it is a reserve source of dietary enzymes and vitamins.

Keywords: Dietary enzymes, Papaya, Traditional medicine, Vitamins

1. Introduction

Papaya is also applied topically for the treatment of cuts, rashes, stings and burns. Papain, a notable protease remains present in papaya. It is believed that it can raise platelet levels in blood. Papaya may be used as a medicine for malaria and dengue fever for its antimalarial and antiplasmodial properties.¹ The raw papaya and its leaf are also used for meat tenderizing for the papain content in the fruit [2].

Nutrients and phytochemicals in the fruit

Papaya fruit is a source of nutrients such as provitamin A carotenoids, vitamin C, folate and dietary fiber. Papaya skin, pulp and seeds also contain a variety of phytochemicals, including lycopene and polyphenols [3].

Health benefits of papaya and use in traditional medicine

Papaya is a good topical supplement for treatment of acne, skin infections and wounds[3,4]. The flesh of papaya is rich in dietary fiber and thus helps in lowering blood cholesterol. It prevents premature ageing and in treatment of endoparasitic worms in gastrointestinal tract.⁴ Papaya fruit aids in proper digestion and prevents constipation. It keeps colon infection away and helps in curing morning sickness and nausea. In addition, it contains anti-inflammatory enzymes which help in curing osteoporosis in elderly people and in alleviating joint arthritis [3,5]. In obese people, it acts as a weight reducer and in controlling body weight. Papaya helps in preventing menstrual cramps and helps in maintaining regular menstrual flow. Papaya is a rich source of Vitamins A and C and thus

promotes immunity [5]. Shampoos and soaps contain papaya extracts as it helps in preventing dandruff and hair fall. It helps in regulating the growth of cancerous cells in hepatic cancers and also prevents renal problems by inducing antioxidant and oxidative free radical scavenging [3,5].

2. Conclusion

Preliminary experimental animal researches has proved that the papaya seeds have potential

3. References

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