Why blackcurrants are good for you

by **Neeti Jaychander** | March 27, 2017, 12:00 AM IST

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Once considered forbidden because of their dark colour, blackcurrants today are known to contain a powerhouse of nutrients for good health. Here are some of the benefits of eating a handful a day.

Vitamin C
The Blackcurrant Foundation in the UK claims, "The most well-known health benefit of blackcurrants is that they contain large amounts of Vitamin C. Vitamin C is an essential nutrient - it cannot be made by the human body and we must therefore eat foods which contain it. Because the body breaks down vitamin C very quickly and does not store very much, we need to eat vitamin C containing foods regularly, preferably every day." The Foundation goes onto list the benefits of Vitamin C – body tissue health, immunity and fighting colds, improving memory and looking after eyesight by reducing damage to lens protein (the main cause of cataract).

Low glycemic index
Risk factors for metabolic conditions like Type 1 and Type 2 diabetes are brought down extensively with regular consumption of blackcurrants. This is primarily because they have an extremely low glycemic index.

Heart health

The GLA present in blackcurrants helps lower blood pressure significantly, in addition to enriching your red blood cells and increasing overall heart health. Just like wine or grapes, they are a rich source of flavanoids which reduce the risk of cardiovascular diseases.

Magnesium and other vitamins

As blackcurrants contain magnesium, they aid better sleep at night, and are a natural cure for insomnia. They also contains many vitamins other than C – Vitamins A, B5, B6, B1 and E. Blackcurrants also have anti-inflammatory properties, and can help reduce joint and muscle pain, stiffness and damage.

Digestion

Blackcurrants contain fibre, and just about 25g per day for women is enough to cleanse the gut and improve digestive health. They promote healthy bacteria and reduce gut inflammation, thereby also keeping certain cancers at bay.

How to make blackcurrant tea

Blackcurrant leaves also impart the same benefits, and can be sipped in a simple caffeine-free infusion. Here's how to make it: Boil 250ml water, and then add 2 tsp finely chopped blackcurrant leaves. Let it steep for 2 minutes, or longer if you prefer your tea strong. For a sweeter infusion, add 1 tsp of dried blackberries to the boiled water and let it steep. Some people even add a hint of both!