**Science-Based Health Benefits of Sohanjana (*Moringa Oleifera*)**

*Moringa oleifera* is a plant that has been praised for its health benefits for thousands of years. It is very rich in healthy antioxidants and bioactive plant compounds. So far, scientists have only investigated a fraction of the many reputed health benefits. Here are 6 health benefits of *Moringa oleifera* that are supported by scientific research.

**1. Moringa Oleifera Is Very Nutritious**

Moringa oleifera is a fairly large tree native to North India. It goes by a variety of names, such as Sohanjana, drumstick tree, horse radish tree or ben oil tree. Almost all parts of the tree are eaten or used as ingredients in traditional herbal medicines. This especially applies to the leaves and pods, which are commonly eaten in parts of India and Africa. Moringa leaves are an excellent source of many vitamins and minerals. One cup of fresh, chopped leaves (21 grams) contains:

Protein: 2 grams

Vitamin B6: 19% of the RDA

Vitamin C: 12% of the RDA

Iron: 11% of the RDA

Riboflavin (B2): 11% of the RDA

Vitamin A (from beta-carotene): 9% of the RDA

Magnesium: 8% of the RDA

In Western countries, the dried leaves are sold as dietary supplements, either in powder or capsule form.

Compared to the leaves, the pods are generally lower in vitamins and minerals. However, they are exceptionally rich in vitamin C. One cup of fresh, sliced pods (100 grams) contains 157% of your daily requirement. The diet of people in developing nations sometimes lacks vitamins, minerals and protein. In these countries, Moringa oleifera can be an important source of many essential nutrients. However, there is one downside: Moringa leaves may also contain high levels of [anti nutrients](https://www.healthline.com/nutrition/how-to-reduce-antinutrients), which can reduce the absorption of minerals and protein. Another thing to keep in mind is that taking Moringa oleifera supplements in capsules won’t supply a large number of nutrients. The amounts are negligible compared to what you consume if you eat a balanced diet based on whole foods.

**SUMMARY**

Moringa leaves are rich in many important nutrients, including protein, vitamin B6, vitamin C, riboflavin and iron.

**2. Moringa Oleifera Is Rich in Antioxidants**

Antioxidants are compounds that act against free radicals in your body. High levels of free radicals may cause oxidative stress, which is associated with chronic diseases like heart disease and type 2 diabetes.

Several antioxidant plant compounds have been found in the leaves of Moringa oleifera. In addition to vitamin C and beta-carotene, these include:

**Quercetin**: This powerful antioxidant may help lower blood pressure.

**Chlorogenic acid**: Also found in high amounts in coffee, chlorogenic acid may help moderate blood sugar levels after meals.

One study in women found that taking 1.5 teaspoons (7 grams) of moringa leaf powder every day for three months significantly increased blood antioxidant levels.

Moringa leaf extract may also be used as a food preservative. It increases the shelf life of meat by reducing oxidation.

**SUMMARY**

Moringa oleifera is rich in various antioxidants, including quercetin and chlorogenic acid. Moringa leaf powder can increase blood antioxidant levels.

**3. Moringa May Lower Blood Sugar Levels**

High blood sugar can be a serious health problem. In fact, it’s the main characteristic of diabetes. Over time, high blood sugar levels raise the risk of many serious health problems, including heart disease. For this reason, it’s important to keep your blood sugar within healthy limits. Interestingly, several studies have shown that Moringa oleifera may help [lower blood sugar levels](https://www.healthline.com/nutrition/15-ways-to-lower-blood-sugar). However, most of the evidence is based on animal studies. Only a few human-based studies exist, and they’re generally of low quality.

One study in 30 women showed that taking 1.5 teaspoons (7 grams) of moringa leaf powder every day for three months reduced fasting blood sugar levels by 13.5%, on average. Another small study in six people with diabetes found that adding 50 grams of moringa leaves to a meal reduced the rise in blood sugar by 21%. Scientists believe these effects are caused by plant compounds such as isothiocyanates ([22](https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/25620073)).

**SUMMARY**

Moringa leaves may lead to reduced blood sugar levels, but more research is needed before any solid recommendations can be made.

**4. Moringa Oleifera May Reduce Inflammation**

Inflammation is the body’s natural response to infection or injury. It’s an essential protective mechanism but may become a major health issue if it continues over a long period of time. In fact, sustained inflammation is linked to many chronic health problems, including heart disease and cancer.

Most whole fruits, vegetables, herbs and spices have [anti-inflammatory properties](https://www.healthline.com/nutrition/13-anti-inflammatory-foods). However, the degree to which they can help depends on the types and amounts of anti-inflammatory compounds they contain.

Scientists believe that isothiocyanates are the main anti-inflammatory compounds in moringa leaves, pods and seeds. But so far, research has been limited to test-tube and animal studies. It remains to be seen if Moringa oleifera has similar anti-inflammatory effects in humans.

**SUMMARY**

In animal and test-tube studies, Moringa oleifera has been shown to have anti-inflammatory properties. This effect has not been studied in humans.

**5. Moringa Can Lower Cholesterol**

Having high cholesterol has been linked to an increased risk of heart disease. Fortunately, many plant foods can effectively [reduce cholesterol](https://www.healthline.com/nutrition/13-foods-that-lower-cholesterol-levels). These include flaxseeds, oats and almonds. Both animal- and human-based studies have shown that Moringa oleifera may have similar cholesterol-lowering effects.

**SUMMARY**

Moringa oleifera can lower your cholesterol levels, potentially reducing the risk of heart disease.

**6. Moringa Oleifera May Protect Against Arsenic Toxicity**

Arsenic contamination of food and water is a problem in many parts of the world. Certain types of [rice may contain particularly high levels](https://www.healthline.com/nutrition/arsenic-in-rice). Long-term exposure to high levels of arsenic may lead to health problems over time. For instance, studies have linked long-term exposure to an increased risk of cancer and heart disease. Interestingly, several studies in mice and rats have shown that the leaves and seeds of Moringa oleifera may protect against some of the effects of arsenic toxicity. These results are promising, but it’s not yet known whether this also applies to humans.

**SUMMARY**

Animal studies suggest that Moringa oleifera may protect against arsenic toxicity. However, this has not yet been studied in humans.

**The Bottom Line**

Moringa oleifera is an Indian tree that has been used in traditional medicine for thousands of years. However, only a few of its many reputed health benefits have been studied scientifically. To date, studies show that Moringa oleifera may lead to modest reductions in blood sugar and cholesterol. It may also have antioxidant and anti-inflammatory effects and protect against arsenic toxicity. Moringa leaves are also highly nutritious and should be beneficial for people who are lacking in essential nutrients.

**References**

https://www.healthline.com/nutrition/6-benefits-of-moringa-oleifera#section6