

Moringa

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Origin of Moringa

The common names for the tropical tree *Moringa Oleifera* are horseradish tree, drumstick tree or miracle tree. The Moringa tree grows mostly in tropical regions, with an average annual temperature of 12 - 40° and less than 500 mm annual rainfall. Unfortunately, this tree's extraordinary capabilities have been forgotten by the African people, so currently the Moringa tree is regarded a weed and often removed. What a pity, because the Moringa plant is one of the most nutritious plants in the world (90 essential nutrients).

Famine and Moringa

Today, sadly people in Africa starve whilst living amongst the Moringa trees and this is due to ignorance on their part of the nutritional value of the Moringa tree. Additionally, every year 1.5 million children die of diarrhoea and 500,000 children go blind due to a lack of vitamin A. Virtually all of these children could be saved by the Moringa tree.

African Moringa trees grow to about 8 metres in height. They are fast growing and can easily grow up to 4 metres in a year.

Practically the whole tree (roots, bark, seeds, flowers, fruits and leaves) can be used for medicinal purposes. Yet here we only consider the powder obtained from ground dried leaves.



Moringa tree



Moringa fruit (drumsticks)



Moringa leaves have the rare quality that they can be picked freshly from the tree and eaten raw.

The healthy ingredients of moringa

Moringa leaves contain very high levels of protein, vitamin A and calcium, along with many other nutrients. Moringa leaves can thus be regarded as a prime natural multivitamin. The following table contains the main ingredients:

Nutrients	100 g amount of dried leaves	comments
Protein	27,1 g	contains 10 different amino acids, 2 times more than yogurt, almost as much as eggs
Fat	2,3 g	oil can be produced from seeds
carbohydrates	38,2 g	
dietary fibre	19,2 g	
Vitamin A	18,9 mg	25 times more than carrots
Vitamin B1	2,6 mg	
Vitamin B2	20,5 mg	
Vitamin B3	8,2 mg	
Vitamin C	17,3 mg	
Calcium	2000 mg	17 times more than milk
Iron	28,2 mg	20 – 25 times more than spinach
magnesium	368 mg	
Potassium	1324 mg	15 times more than bananas

(Source: Dr. Hans-Martin Hirt, Anamed)

Other ingredients

Moringa also contains vitamin D, E and K, other trace elements such as copper and zinc, omega-3, omega-6 and omega-9, and many phytochemicals such as carotene, lutein, zeaxanthin and chlorophyll.

The high content of protein and carbohydrates makes Moringa perfect for nourishment in famine ravaged areas. The deficiency of vitamin A is the main cause of infant mortality and blindness in Africa, both of which could be prevented with Moringa. Moringa is also an ideal food for pregnant and breastfeeding women in poor areas.

What effects can be expected from Moringa in our area?

As malnourishment does not really occur in the western world, the main benefit seems misplaced, yet Moringa can be used to nourish emaciated cancer patients, malnourished elderly people and cases of extreme anorexia.

Weakened HIV patients regain their physical strength and courage using Moringa. So Moringa together with Artemisia, are deemed to be a very good treatment for AIDS.

Moringa and diabetes

Moringa has a beneficial effect in diabetes mellitus type II; however, it requires a relatively high dose of 8 g per day. The hypoglycaemic effect is less strong than mulberry leaves, but still significant. Taking these two powders (Moringa and Mulberry) of dried leaves in combination promises a simple and effective treatment for high blood sugar, always assuming that patients stick to the appropriate diet.

Supporting effect in cancer

With cancer patients Artemisia is determined to have the higher anti-tumour effect, but Moringa strongly supports the development of the immune system and the inhibition of the inflammation around tumours. Thus a combination of the two works better than anyone by itself. As there is no funding for studies in this area, the combination therapy is empirically applied in mission hospitals, with very good results and low cost.



Moringa leaf

Other possible uses for Moringa are to improve high blood pressure, anaemia and sleep disorders. It also assists in combating infections caused by bacteria, viruses and fungi.

In the following indications Moringa may have a preventive or curative effect:

- ▶ Malnutrition (elderly people, anorexia, cancer)
- ▶ AIDS
- ▶ Type II diabetes
- ▶ Cancer
- ▶ Anaemia
- ▶ Inflammatory Diseases
- ▶ High Blood Pressure
- ▶ Insomnia
- ▶ Macular degeneration (age-amblyopia)
- ▶ Acts gently on the stomach

There are no known contra-indications