

Indian Cherry

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Introduction:

Indian cherry belongs to the family Boraginaceae. In India, it has various names in different languages, such as in Telegu Banka Nakkeru, botgiri, botuka, chinna-nakkeru and in English, it is called as cherry and glue berry. It is mostly grown in tropical and subtropical regions, commonly known as Lasaura. It is a small to a medium-size deciduous tree with a short-crooked trunk, short bole and spreading crown. Leaves are simple, entire and slightly dentate, elliptical-lanceolate to broad ovate with a round and cordate base. The stem bark is greyish-brown smooth or longitudinally wrinkled. Flowers are short-stalked, bisexual and white to pinkish in color and appear in loose corymbose cymes. Fruits are cherry-sized and are edible with sticky flesh mass. It is a yellow or pinkish-yellow shining globose or ovoid drupe seated in a saucer-like enlarged calyx. It turns black on ripening and the pulp gets viscid.

Nutritional value:

Fruits are nutritious with the additional advantage of high dietary fiber content that plays an important role in decreasing the risk of many metabolic diseases and have a high calorific value of 684 kcal/100g. Fruit pulp (100 g) contains 35 % protein, 18% carbohydrate, 37% fat and 6 % water. While, minerals content (mg/100g) comprise Ca (55 mg), Zn (2 mg), Iron (6 mg), P (275 mg), Mn (2 mg), Cr (0.2 mg) and Cu (1.6 mg). Hence, suggesting its high calorific value, and also this fruit can fulfil the dietary need of potassium and zinc content.

Phytochemicals:

Fruits contain saponins, amino acids, flavonoids and fatty acids like palmitic, stearic, linoleic acids, oleic, arachidic, behenic acids; flavonoids such as kaempferol, quercetin, isorhamnetin, (butanol fraction) and arabinoglucan i.e., D-glucose and L-arabinose, glycosides, aglycone and L-rhamnopyranoside.

Therapeutic uses:

Anti-inflammatory: It has a good anti-inflammatory activity as seeds contain fatty acids and flavonoids. Consumption of ripe sweet fruits reduces the inflammation due to its acidic property.

Wound healing property: It acts as a wound-healing agent due to the presence of large quantities of amino acids, flavonoids and saponins.

Antidiabetic activity: Fruit pulp has a good antidiabetic potentiality due to the presence of phytochemicals like flavonoids, & it significantly reduces the blood glucose level & body weight, which can be useful for the management of diabetes mellitus.

Degenerative Disorders: Seeds and leaves possess powerful antioxidant activity, and it could be a potential source of natural antioxidants that could have great importance as a therapeutic agent in preventing/slowing down the progress of ageing and age associated oxidative stress related degenerative diseases.

Helps to treat Respiratory problems: It acts as an expectorant and is useful to treat cough, bronchitis, lung diseases, etc., by thinning and loosening mucus in air passages.

Helps to treat urinary problems: Daily eating of ripen fruit pulp relieves burning micturition and Haematuria, and also helps to reduce the irritation of the urinary passage due to its high mucilaginous nature.

Antimicrobial activity: Fruits has potential antimicrobial property and help to protect the body from bacteria, fungi and viruses due to the presence of phytochemicals like Saponins.

Boosts the immune system: It acts as an immunomodulator due to the presence of phytochemicals like Saponins, flavonoids and amino acids and helps to improve the immune function by stimulating the production of T-cells to protect the body against cancers, various infections and diseases.

Hepatoprotective: Eating this fruit helps to protect the liver from damage due to the presence of phytochemicals like Saponins and flavonoids.

Conclusion:

It is not a considerable fruit but it has good nutritional composition and phytochemicals due to which it has multiple advantages and plays an important role in healthcare. It is used in the treatment of various infections and diseases. Being sweet, astringent and bitter in taste, it acts as a hair tonic, skin eruptions, ulcers, and herpetic skin lesions and other types of skin diseases and vitiated humor.

