

Embrace the Nutritional Power of Buckwheat: Fuel Your Body, Flourish Your Health

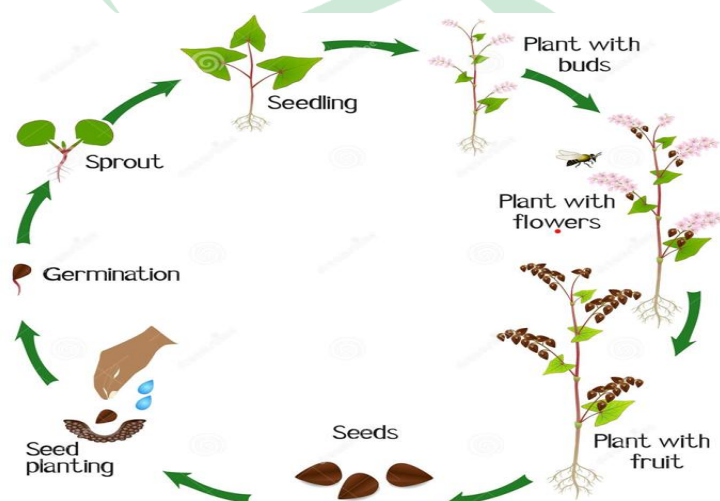
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ARTICLE ID: 28

Introduction

Buckwheat (*Fagopyrum esculentum*) is a flowering plant that belongs to the family Polygonaceae. It is Pseudo-cereal crop. Which originated from the wide areas of Central Asia? Buckwheat is mostly grown in J&K, Himachal Pradesh and Uttarakhand and in some Northern state of India i.e, Sikkim, Assam, Arunachal Pradesh, Nagaland, Manipur also cultivated in Nilgiri and Palni Hills in Southern India. Under the all India coordinated research network project systematic research work on pseudo-cereal has started. Now, new name of the project is the All India coordinator research network project. Buckwheat is known for its short life cycle, typically completing its lifecycle in 60 to 90 days. Flower Structure: Buckwheat flowers are small and arranged in clusters known as inflorescences. Flowers are typically white to pink in color and have a distinctive shape. They are generally hermaphroditic, meaning each flower has both male and female reproductive parts are present. The inflorescence of buckwheat is called a raceme. Each buckwheat flower consists of five sepals, five petals, eight stamens (male reproductive organs), and three fused carpels (female reproductive organs).



Life Cycle of Buckwheat



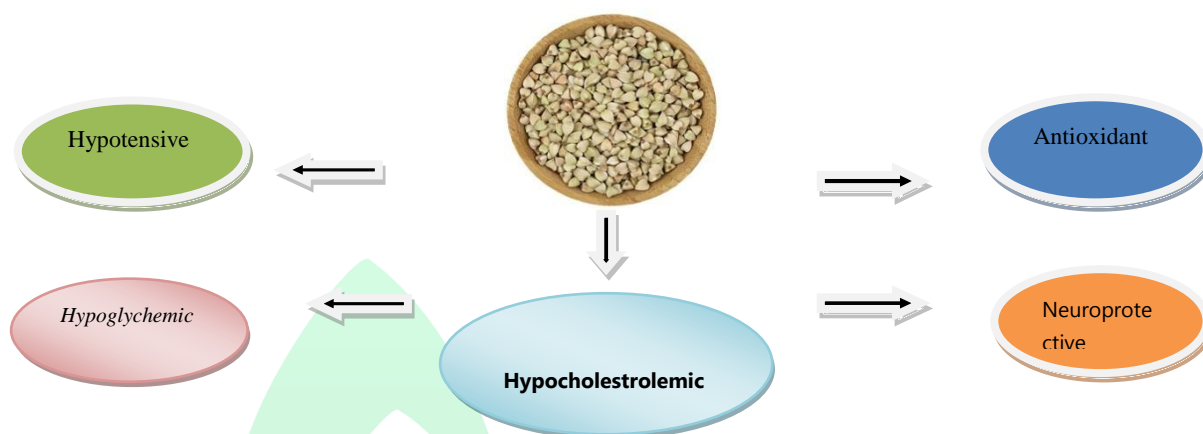
Buckwheat is primarily a self-pollinating plant, although cross-pollination can also occur. After successful pollination, the fertilized ovules within the flower develop into seeds. Buckwheat produces small, triangular seeds that are typically brown or dark-colored. The seeds are enclosed within a tough, outer shell called the achene.

Buckwheat (*Fagopyrum esculentum*) is a nutritious pseudo-cereal that is known for its unique biochemical composition. Carbohydrates: Buckwheat is primarily composed of carbohydrates, making it a good source of energy. The main carbohydrate in buckwheat is starch. Proteins Buckwheat is notable for its high-quality protein content. It contains all the essential amino acids, including lysine, which is limited in many other grains. The protein content in buckwheat can range from 10% to 15% of its dry weight. Fats Buckwheat seeds contain a small amount of fat, typically around 3% to 4%. It is low in saturated fat and does not contain cholesterol.

Rutin and Flavonoids: One of the unique bioactive compounds found in buckwheat is rutin, a flavonoid with antioxidant properties. **Vitamins and Minerals:** Buckwheat is a good source of various vitamins and minerals. It contains vitamin B6, niacin, folate, and minerals such as magnesium, phosphorus, and manganese. Buckwheat also contains trace amounts of zinc, copper, and iron. **Antioxidants:** In addition to rutin, buckwheat contains other antioxidants, including phenolic compounds such as quercetin and caffeic acid derivatives.

Buckwheat is a highly nutritious seed that offers a wide range of health benefits. Despite its name, buckwheat is not a cereal grain but a seed from a plant related to rhubarb. It has been cultivated for thousands of years and is commonly used in various cuisines around the world. Buckwheat is naturally gluten-free, making it an excellent choice for individuals with gluten intolerance or celiac disease. Buckwheat is a plant used for many purposes, such as consumed as a food and used in the treatment of diseases. It is a good source of many vitamins and minerals and has balanced nutritional value. Because of its nutrient content and many positive effects on human health, buckwheat has become a functional food, recently. Main effects of buckwheat on human health are its hypotensive, hypoglycemic, hypocholesterolemic, neuroprotective and antioxidant effects. Thus, it is considered an alternative food component in dietary treatment for chronic and metabolic diseases, such as diabetes, hypertension and celiac disease. Also, its rich nutrient content supports daily diet and provides a better eating profile. As a result, buckwheat is accepted as a functional food,

suggested to improve human health and is used in the treatment of diseases. The aim of this review is to explain some positive effects of buckwheat on human health.



Benefits of Buckwheat on Health

Nutrient-Rich Profile: Buckwheat is a powerhouse of essential nutrients. It is rich in complex carbohydrates, dietary fiber, and high-quality protein. Buckwheat protein is particularly notable for its excellent amino acid composition, providing all the essential amino acids needed by the body. It is also a good source of vitamins, including B vitamins (such as niacin, folate, and thiamin), and minerals like magnesium, manganese, phosphorus, and copper. The diverse nutrient composition of buckwheat contributes to its health-promoting properties.

Heart Health: Consuming buckwheat can have positive effects on heart health. The fiber content, particularly a type of fiber called resistant starch, has been linked to reduced levels of LDL (bad) cholesterol. High levels of LDL cholesterol are associated with an increased risk of heart disease. Buckwheat's fiber content helps regulate cholesterol levels and may contribute to a healthier cardiovascular system. Moreover, buckwheat contains compounds like rutin and quercetin, which have been shown to have anti-inflammatory and antioxidant properties, further supporting heart health.

Blood Sugar Control: The high fiber content in buckwheat plays a crucial role in managing blood sugar levels. The soluble fiber in buckwheat slows down the digestion and absorption of carbohydrates, preventing sudden spikes in blood sugar levels. This can be particularly beneficial for individuals with diabetes or those aiming to maintain stable blood sugar levels.



Research has shown that buckwheat consumption may improve insulin sensitivity and glucose metabolism, further supporting blood sugar control.

Digestive Health: Buckwheat's fiber content promotes healthy digestion. The insoluble fiber adds bulk to the stool, preventing constipation and promoting regular bowel movements. This can help maintain a healthy digestive system. Additionally, buckwheat contains certain compounds, including rutin, which have anti-inflammatory properties in the gut. These properties can contribute to a healthy gut environment, potentially alleviating symptoms of digestive disorders such as inflammatory bowel disease.

Antioxidant Properties: Buckwheat is rich in antioxidants, which are compounds that help protect the body from damage caused by harmful free radicals. Antioxidants play a crucial role in reducing oxidative stress and inflammation, both of which are associated with chronic diseases like heart disease, cancer, and neurodegenerative disorders. The main antioxidants in buckwheat include rutin, quercetin, and vitamin E. These antioxidants neutralize free radicals, reducing cell damage and supporting overall health.

Weight Management: Including buckwheat in your diet may support weight management efforts. Its high fiber and protein content promote satiety, helping you feel fuller for longer periods. This can reduce overeating and contribute to a healthy weight. Moreover, buckwheat is relatively low in calories compared to other grains, making it a nutritious addition to a calorie-controlled diet. Its slow digestion and steady release of energy can also help regulate appetite and prevent blood sugar fluctuations that can lead to cravings.

Reduced Risk of Chronic Diseases: The antioxidants present in buckwheat, such as rutin and quercetin, have been associated with a reduced risk of chronic diseases. These compounds have anti-inflammatory and anti-cancer properties, protecting cells

Gluten-Free Alternative: Buckwheat is a valuable option for individuals following a gluten-free diet. Unlike wheat, barley, and rye, buckwheat is naturally gluten-free. It can be used as a substitute for gluten-containing grains in various recipes, providing a nutritious alternative for those with gluten intolerance or celiac disease.

References

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