Top 10 Health Benefits of Using Barley in Your Daily Diet
Deblina Biswas  Diet

Barley, an important member of the grass family, is a wonderfully versatile cereal grain. It is one of the first cultivated grains and is now grown widely. The amazing health benefits of barley make it a staple of Tibetan cuisine and were eaten by peasants in Medieval Europe. Barley is used as animal fodder and as an important component of various health foods. It is used in stews and soups and barley bread in many cultures. This cereal grain can be used for weight loss with vegan diet because of its high nutrient content. Barley grains are most commonly made from malt in an ancient and traditional method of preparation.

Nutritional Profile of Barley

The fiber rich cereal grain barley is a healthful addition to a healthy diet. Barley’s nutritional value is immense. This centuries-old grain contains important vitamins, minerals and fiber. It is slim on fat, and, like other plant products, cholesterol-free. Here’s a closer look:
• **Fat and cholesterol:** Like other plant foods, barley is cholesterol-free and low in fat.

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Nutrition Facts</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Barley, hulled</td>
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<tr>
<td>Amount Per 100 grams</td>
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<tr>
<td>Calories</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>% Daily Value*</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total Fat</td>
<td>2.3 g</td>
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<tr>
<td>Saturated fat</td>
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<tr>
<td>Polyunsaturated fat</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cholesterol</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sodium</td>
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<tr>
<td>Potassium</td>
<td>452 mg</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total Carbohydrate</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dietary fiber</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sugar</td>
<td>0.8 g</td>
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<tr>
<td>Protein</td>
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<td>Vitamin B-6</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
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<td>Magnesium</td>
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*% Daily Values are based on a 2,000 calorie diet. Your daily values may be higher or lower depending on your calorie needs.

• **Fiber:** Barley is an outstanding source of dietary fiber and contains both insoluble and soluble fiber. Soluble fiber is immensely effective in reducing blood cholesterol and can
lower the risk of heart disease. Soluble fiber also prevents diabetes. The insoluble fiber found in barley may help lower the risk of cancer.

- **Vitamins and minerals**: Barley contains many vitamins, and essential minerals for the body including, thiamine (Vitamin B1), niacin (Vitamin B3), iron, selenium, magnesium, zinc, copper and phosphorus.
- **Antioxidants**: Barley contains antioxidants, which are essential for maintaining good health. Antioxidants effectively act to slow down the rate of oxidative damage.
- **Phytochemicals**: Barley contains phytochemicals, which are plant-based chemicals. The presence of Phytochemicals in barley helps decrease the risks for certain diseases like heart disease, diabetes and cancer.

10 Interesting Health Benefits of Barley

Barley grass is the beautiful leaf of the barley plant. The real beauty of barley is found in the leaves and both barley cereal and barley grass juice is loaded with health benefitting nutrients. The barley health benefits are several. Here are some of the primary reasons why one must include barley in the diet.

**Barley Helps Reduce the Risk of High Blood Pressure**

High blood pressure is extremely serious medical condition that can cause a coronary heart disease, heart attack, stroke, heart failure, kidney failure and other serious health problems. The major symptoms of high blood pressure include nausea, severe headache, vomiting, confusion, vision changes and nose bleeds. The presence of fiber and niacin in barley aid in lowering the risk of high blood pressure.

According to the researchers of American Heart Association, long term barley eaters have a lower systolic blood pressure as well as a decreased risk of developing high blood pressure. When the heart beats, it pushes and contracts blood through the arteries of the heart to the rest of the human body. This force creates pressure on the arteries. This is called systolic blood pressure. Regular eating of
barley helps prevent cholesterol build up in the arteries of the heart. Therefore, barley must in the high blood pressure diet chart for optimum control of hypertension.

Barley Improves Cardiovascular Health

The list of healthy foods for the heart is incomplete without the inclusion of barley in it. Barley also finds a place in the common home remedies for heart health. Consumption of barley powder on a daily basis is effective to reduce the risk of heart diseases by lowering the level of absorbed cholesterol in the intestines. The soluble fiber known as beta-glucan found in barley and other whole grain fibers promotes healthy blood lipid levels and reduces the cholesterol absorption in the intestine.

It also lowers the level of harmful LDL cholesterol and total cholesterol level in both men and women. This in turn lessens the risk of coronary heart diseases, stroke, heart failure and heart attacks.

Barley Helps Prevent Osteoporosis

Osteoporosis is a disease in which the bone's quality and density are reduced rapidly. In this medical condition, the bones become more fragile and brittle, and a chance of fracture is immensely enhanced. The bones become weaker because they rapidly lose density. Barley is one of the most noted healthy foods that help to reduce the problems of osteoporosis.
The reduced level of estrogen during menopause can lead to bone loss and it is important to increase the intake of various vitamins and mineral in order to ensure bone health. Barley contains phosphorous, copper, manganese several other nutrients that immensely help postmenopausal women maintain healthy and strong bones. A 62gm serving of barley meets 36% of your regular requirement for copper – a nutrient that helps lower the symptoms of arthritis.

**Barley Consumption Prevent Diabetes**

The barley health benefits for diabetes are well known. Diabetes, also known as diabetes mellitus is one of the fatal chronic diseases of modern times that distresses millions of people around the world. The primary causes of diabetes is the modern sedentary lifestyle with lack of physical activity. Diabetes is a harmful disease in itself that also increase the risk of eye damage, heart attack, stroke and kidney failure.
So, the inclusion of barley in the diabetic diet along with regular workouts to lose fat can have a positive effect on diabetes. Because barley has a low glycemic index, it does not cause the blood sugar levels to spike suddenly. The presence of insoluble fiber in barley also helps control blood sugar level. Researchers suggest that the diabetic patients should try eating boiled barley in place of rice.

Barley Helps You Lose Weight

Excessive body weight increases the chances of heart attack, stroke, diabetes, gout, gallstones and cancer. Being overweight can make you feel tired and lead to various physical disorders such as breathing problems, skin irritation and lower back and joint pains that can cripple you and eliminate mobility.

Barley is a great source of fiber that helps one lose weight because of its high content of insoluble fiber. The insoluble fiber combine with water to expand in the stomach and make one feel full for a
long time. Barley water or soup can be easily included in the [1200 cal meal plan](#) as a wholesome and healthy snack.

**Barley Prevents Gall Stones**

Gallstones are small pieces of solid substance that form in the gallbladder. Risk factors for getting gallstones include obesity, genetics, estrogen, cholesterol drugs, diabetes, gender and age. There are several symptoms of gallstones- pain in the upper abdomen and upper back, vomiting, nausea, bloating, heartburn, gas, and indigestion.

According to scientists eating foods rich in insoluble fiber like barley help prevent gallstones. Insoluble fiber aids in moving the food quickly through the small intestines and lowers the secretion of bile acids making it an outstanding nutrient for the digestive system.

**Barley Reduces the Risk of Cancer**

Cancer is a serious medical condition caused by an uncontrolled growth and uncontrolled division of abnormal cells in a particular part of the human body. Cancerous cells are commonly known as malignant cells. The common risk factors for cancer include tobacco, aging, sun exposure, chemicals, radiation exposure and many other substances, some bacteria and viruses, family history of cancer, certain hormones, poor diet, lack of physical activity, obesity and alcohol.
Selenium, a nutrient present in barley aids in reducing the risk of cancer by supporting the metabolic functions. Additionally, barley contains plant antioxidants and lignans which further increase the cancer-fighting properties of barley.

Barley is Protective against Childhood Asthma

Yet another effective use of barley nutrition is that it helps in protecting against childhood asthma, one of the most widespread respiratory disorders among children all around the world. Increased consumption of whole grains such as barley reduces the chances of childhood asthma by almost 50%.
The powerful antioxidants, particularly vitamin C and E found in barley helps in normalizing breathing and reduce the prevalence of wheezing. The probability of asthma with bronchial hyperresponsiveness (BHR) is also reduced with high intake of barley.

Barley Improves Intestinal Health and Regularizes Bowel Movement

Barley can be the ultimate solution for those suffering from bowel irregularities and constipation. Barley not only improves overall intestinal health, but also adds bulk to the stool and reduces transit time of feces, which in turn reduces the risk of hemorrhoids and colon cancer.
The dietary fiber present in barley helps in maintaining the healthy balance of the gut-friendly bacteria in the large intestines that ferment the insoluble fibers and produce short-chain fatty acids that acts a fuel for the cells of the large intestine. It also produces propionic and acetic acid that fuel the liver and muscle cells respectively.

Selenium in Barley Improves Skin Elasticity

Barley benefits are not only limited to physical health, but also for the skin as well. One of the most important uses of barley for skin is maintenance of skin elasticity. The high quantity of Selenium found in Barley is an important component that helps in preserving the elasticity of the skin that prevents premature skin aging and protects the skin against the damaging effects of free radicals and oxidative stress.
This in turn, decreases the appearance of the three signs of skin aging – wrinkles, fine lines and sagging skin. So, barely water can be enjoy as a powerful natural anti-aging drink that will help in maintaining youthful and lively texture of the skin.

How to Include Barley in Your Diet

Barley is a hearty and nutritious whole grain, which like oats, is inexpensive to prepare.

Barley Water
Losing weight is a war that people are fighting today. Individuals are ready to try everything to lose a few kilos. Benefits of barley water to lose weight are well known and it is one of the best natural home remedies for weight loss. How to concoct barley water for weight loss? It is best to make the barley water at home instead of buying the barley water from the shop as the latter is loaded with artificial preservatives and sugar. Here is a very easy recipe that one can use to prepare his barley water.

At first boil 1.5 kg of barley pearls until they turn soft. (add two volumes of water to one volume of barley). Then stain and carefully collect the extract. If you don’t prefer the taste of the barley water, you can add two teaspoons of lemon or orange juice or vanilla extract to add flavors to the barley drink. You can also add three teaspoons of brown sugar to sweeten it. If you store it in a cool refrigerator, it can last for a longer period.

Barley and Lentil Soup

Here is a healthy and hearty barley soup that you can include in your healthy breakfast recipes to lose weight. This is one of the best ways to enjoy barley nutrition. It combines the goodness of the protein-rich lentils along with high-fiber vegetables.

Ingredients:

- Barley – 1/2 Cup
- Lentils – 1 Cup
- Chopped Carrots, Celery and Mushrooms – 1 Cup
- Onions – 1 Cup
- Tomato Paste – 1 tbsp
- Vegetable Broth – 6 Cups
- Bay Leaf – 1
- Finely Chopped Parsley – 1 tbsp
- Black Pepper – 1/2 tsp
- Salt to taste

Procedure:
Sprinkle some olive oil in a frying pan and fry the onions and garlic for 4 minutes. Add the vegetables stirring occasionally. Then add the vegetable broth, lentils, barley, tomato paste and bay leaf. Boil the
soup for 60 minutes at reduces heat or till the lentils are tender. Blend it well, add the salt, pepper and parsley and remove from flame.

Inculcation of barley in the healthy diet is sure to fulfill most of the body’s essential nutritional requirements and don’t forget to share your barley experience with us.

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