

Lemons

Citrus × limon



Lemons Benefits

*The lemon (Citrus × limon) has many health improvement properties. The crisp and tangy aroma of lemon is unmistakable and it is therefore often used to scent many different household and beauty products. Lemons are known for their very high **Vitamin C** content. This Vitamin C, along with other **vitamins** and minerals in lemons has been shown to help fight infections, boost immune system, and even promote weight loss efforts.*

History & Habitat

Lemons, also referred to by the Latin name *Citrus × limon*, are produced on a small evergreen tree that is native to regions in Asia. The lemon tree was introduced to Europe sometime around 1 A.D., but was not widely cultivated there until the 15th century. Christopher Columbus introduced lemon seeds to the Americas

during his voyages of discovery. Lemons are mainly produced commercially in China and Mexico, as well as the South American countries of Brazil and Argentina.

Useful parts of the Lemon

When it comes to lemons, nearly the entire fruit can be used for health benefits.

The juice of Lemons is often widely used to gain these health benefits as it is easily extracted from the fruit. Tonics are often made from the juice for a refreshing drink and for health purposes. Lemon juice is an acid (pH 2-3) as it is made up of about 5% Citric Acid. The word Citric Acid is often confused with the scientific name of Vitamin C which is Ascorbic Acid, as Lemon Juice also contains lots of Vitamin C. Lemons are one of the only foods that are anionic (alkaline) but this only applies to fresh lemons, as after about half an hour of reacting with the air (oxidation) lemon juice becomes cationic (acidic). (The only other edible substance that is anionic is pure **Calcium**).

Leaves from the lemon tree can be used to make teas and for flavouring when cooking meats and sea foods.

The fruit and grated peel are frequently used in the preparation of foods and beverages for flavor and aroma.

How to Take

Lemons can serve as a health aid in many forms, including as an essential oil to be inhaled or applied topically, as a juice, a tea, as a bath water or facial and body wash. It can also be used as a natural antibacterial cleaning agent.

Main Active Ingredients

Vitamin C

Lemons are most known for their Vitamin C content. With 53 grams of Vitamin C, one lemon provides more than 60 percent of the daily recommended allowance for this nutrient. Lemons also contain a range of other vitamins and minerals.

Essential Oils

Lemon essential oil is derived from the rind, which makes up about 45 percent of the lemon. Lemon peel contains over 200 compounds, both volatile and non-volatile. Lemon oil contains about 70 percent

limonene and about 20 percent other monoterpenes. This oil also contains about 6 percent aldehydes, alcohols, and esters, such as citral and linalool, with less than 1 percent concentration of coumarins.

Health Benefits

Below are some of the most interesting health benefits of lemons and their essential oils:

Lemon Essential Oil

Lemon essential oil has many health benefits and coupled with its delightful and distinctive aroma it is no wonder it is a highly desirable aromatherapy oil. It is a very versatile remedy for the whole body. The essential oils can be used in the following ways: they can be inhaled as aromas, taken internally if diluted, or applied topically for a variety of conditions.

Improve mood

Studies performed by The Ohio State University showed that subjects exposed to lemon oil aroma were consistently affected with improved and more positive mood outcomes. In fact, levels of the feel-good chemical neurotransmitter called norepinephrine were actually increased upon inhalation of lemon, showing an actual physical and emotional effect within the brain.

Improve energy and alertness

The scent of lemons can also improve brain functioning, increasing alertness, mental focus, and clarity. The revitalizing effects of lemon oil are due to its uplifting and energizing scent. Lemon oil may also be taken internally for an energy boost.

Antimicrobial properties

Lemon oil has antimicrobial properties, making it excellent at reducing many types of bacteria, viruses, and fungus. It can be used internally to help with cold and flu symptoms and to help gastrointestinal disturbances. Lemon oil makes an excellent mouthwash and can be applied to affected skin areas to reduce inflammation and microbial activity.

Astringent effects

Lemon oil helps to dissolve oils and reduce oil production on the skin and hair, making it a good choice for the treatment of acne. Lemon oil also has lightening effects that can be used on the skin or in the hair.

Lemons Help with Acne

The citric acid and vitamin C contained in lemons have been shown to work wonders for acne patients. As an **alkaline fruit**, lemons also kill many forms of bacteria that are known to cause acne. Drinking lemon juice with water every morning is the easiest way to tap into these healing properties, but there are some more powerful solutions for those suffering with worse cases of acne.

Mixing one part of lemon juice with one part of rose or honey water and placing it on areas of the skin affected by acne has been shown to be an effective solution. The solution is to be left on the skin for a half hour and then washed off with water. This procedure is to be repeated twice daily.

Another treatment is to apply fresh lemon juice directly to affected areas with a cotton ball or swab and leave it overnight. The solution should then be cleaned off in the morning. As this is the least diluted of all the above solutions, it has a tendency to burn at first, but is considered the most effective way to use lemons to treat acne.

Reduce Negative Emotions

Not only are lemons good for the skin, but seemingly for the psyche as well. Consumption of lemons, or even just inhaling the aroma (aromatherapy) has been shown to improve mood and lessen or even remove tension, nervousness, anxiety, exhaustion, dizziness, and fatigue.

Lemons are also thought to improve concentration, which is why so many room fresheners and air sprays are lemon scented. Some people even squeeze a few lemon drops on a handkerchief and inhale it to help with focus.

Treat Canker Sores

Lemons have scientifically proven antiviral and antibacterial qualities. A glass of lukewarm lemon juice mixed with water swished around the mouth three times a day has been shown to cure canker sores. As canker sores are open wounds, there may be some burning at first, but this is to be expected until the wounds become more sterilized.

Lemons Cure Fevers

Lemons have long been thought to help with fevers as well, an offshoot of the calming properties of the fruit. Hot water, lemon juice,

and honey mixed together is a great solution to a fever. Consume every two hours until the fever subsides.

Colds and the Flu

Lemons have a twofold positive effect on colds and the flu. The vitamin C helps with the internal infection, while the antiviral properties of the lemon will help with the mucous membranes of your throat and mouth.

It is best to treat a cold or a flu at the very beginning and flood your system with as much vitamin C from lemons as you can find. Squeeze lemon juice fresh and mix with lukewarm water. Consume every two hours.

You can use lemon juice as a gargle as well as a juice to help with the throat problems that colds and the flu cause. Combine with a little sea salt to help with a sore throat.

A Topical Solution for Corns

Slices of lemon placed between a bandage and a corn provide much needed nutrients to the callous part of the injury. The use of lemon essential oil is also proven to work wonders for calloused areas.

Help Relieve Eczema

Eczema sufferers have found relief from lemon wraps. Dilute a small amount of lemon essential oil combined with honey in lukewarm water. Soak a cloth made of linen in this solution, squeeze out the extra solution, and place the cloth on the area of the body affected by eczema for 15 minutes at a time, 3 times a day.

Lemons Fight Fatigue

Long distance runners and hikers are known to simply stick a straw in the top of a lemon for a much needed boost of energy. Lemon juice seems to quench thirst much more effectively than water alone, and the taste and aroma seem to stimulate the brain, giving a much needed mental boost that also helps fight fatigue.

Lemon Peel can Reduce Cholesterol

A recent study has shown that eating Lemon Peel can be effective in lowering cholesterol. It's thought this is not just due to the pectin concentration of lemon peel, but to a variety of active ingredients in the peel.

Lemons Herb Notes / Side Effects

As with most essential oils, Lemon essential oil should be diluted before taking internally or applying topically.