

Quince - Cydonia

Rosaceae



The quince is the sole member of the genus Cydonia in the family Rosaceae. It is a deciduous tree that bears hard, aromatic bright golden-yellow pome fruit, similar in appearance to a pear. Ripe quince fruits are hard and tart and seldom eaten raw, but are processed into marmalade, jam, jelly or alcoholic beverages.

The health benefits of quince include its potential ability to possibly prevent cancer, aid in weight loss, improve digestive health, reduce cholesterol, and boost the immune system. It may also prevent

gastrointestinal diseases, soothes inflammation, improves the health of your skin, decreases blood pressure, prevents allergic reactions, and stimulates circulation in the cardiovascular system.

What is Quince?

Quince is a rather unusual fruit that is closely related to apples and pears. Its scientific name is *Cydonia oblonga*, [1]and it is the only member of its genus. The quince tree is deciduous and rather small, while its ripened fruit is yellowish-gold in color and is somewhat similar to pears in terms of shape and consistency. The value of the fruit as a food item dates back a long time, but the small tree is often grown for its ornamental quality as well, because of its attractive pale pink blossoms.

It is native to the Eurasian area, including Uzbekistan, Armenia, Turkey, Hungary, Macedonia, and other nearby regions. Historically, it may have played a much larger role than most people expect. Some researchers actually think that when “apples” were referenced in ancient history, they were more likely talking about quince, which was much more common in those areas.

Quince is a small tree or shrub of the rose family native to Iran, Turkey, and possibly Greece. Photo Credit: Shutterstock

You can utilize quince in jams, jellies, and puddings, as well as use it in a similar way to pears as a side dish or breakfast food. Different countries use quince in different ways, often using its juice as a flavoring agent. However, the real benefit of quince is in eating the skin and the fleshy fruit, since it is packed with beneficial nutrients, including vitamins, minerals, phenolic compounds, antioxidants, and dietary fiber.

Nutritional Value of Quince

Besides being a readily available and delicious fruit, quince is also valued because of its important place in human health. According to USDA it is a rich source of vitamin C, zinc, potassium, copper, iron, and dietary fiber. It is also rich in certain organic compounds like catechin, epicatechin, limonene, and various other phytonutrients, all of which contribute to the health benefits of quince.

Health Benefits of Quince

There are many health benefits of quince, which include cancer prevention, weight loss, skin care, and more. Let us discuss them in detail below;



May Have Anticancer Potential

It seems as though cancer is one of the most frequently discussed diseases in recent history. Therefore, anything that can reduce the chances of developing cancer usually becomes quite popular. Free radicals are the dangerous byproducts of cellular metabolism that can cause healthy cells to mutate or die. According to a report published in the *Nutrients Journal*, “Polyphenols, found abundantly in plants, display

many anticarcinogenic properties including their inhibitory effects on cancer cell proliferation, tumor growth, angiogenesis, metastasis, and inflammation as well as inducing apoptosis.” The high level of antioxidants, including phenolic and phytonutrient compounds, found in quince is very effective in neutralizing or eliminating free radicals in the body.

May Promote Weight Loss

One of the best ways to keep your weight down and guarantee a speedy metabolism that keeps your system running optimally is to improve your digestion. Quince is high in dietary fiber, like most fruits, and the significant levels of fiber mean that your gastrointestinal system works more efficiently and regularly. You will have more energy and keep your excess weight down by improving your digestive health.

May Reduce the Risk of Gastrointestinal Diseases

Beyond the general functioning of the digestive tract that dietary fiber facilitates, it can also help prevent certain gastrointestinal conditions like inflammatory bowel disease (IBD), or diverticulitis. The catechin and epicatechin contained in the

fiber are likely to bind with certain cancer-causing toxins that are found in the colon, thereby protecting the mucous membrane of this important organ system.

May Improve Skin Care

The high level of antioxidants and vitamins found in quince are very beneficial for keeping your skin healthy and young. Antioxidants eliminate the damage that free radicals cause to skin cells, thereby reducing the appearance of wrinkles, eliminating blemishes, and helping to defend your skin against the effects of UV radiation.

May Regulate Blood Pressure

Potassium is one of the most important minerals in the human body because it is essential for maintaining blood pressure and facilitating effective fluid transfer in the body's cells. In terms of blood pressure, potassium causes the blood vessels and arteries to relax, thereby reducing the strain on the cardiovascular system. This can decrease the chances of developing conditions like atherosclerosis, which can lower your risk for coronary heart diseases, heart attacks, and strokes.

May Act As A Remedy for Allergic Reactions

Quince has long been praised for its ability to control allergic reactions. When applied as a salve or gel on the skin, it can benefit atopic dermatitis and similar skin conditions. The high levels of vitamin C also help to control inflammation and improve the health and appearance of your skin.



May Boost Immunity

As mentioned earlier, quince has a huge amount of antioxidants, but other vitamins, such as vitamin C and E also boost the immune system in various ways. For example, vitamin C stimulates the immune system to increase the supply of white

blood cells, which are the body's first line of defense against pathogens, viruses, and bacteria.

May Improve Circulation & Hair Health

The rich mineral content of quince includes iron, copper, and zinc. These three minerals, along with various other trace elements, are necessary for the production of red blood cells. When red blood cell production is high, the circulation around the body increases as more oxygen is carried throughout the body. This causes increased blood flow to the skin and scalp, which increases hair follicle health and stimulates growth.

Word of Caution: There is no definitive evidence of side effects or risks of quince, and all of the information seems to point towards it being a great addition to any diet. However, quince seeds do contain trace amounts of cyanide, so eating more than a few seeds could be troublesome. Additional scientific studies exploring the pros and cons of this delicious fruit are currently ongoing.