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Moringa Powder: A Brief Review

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SUMMARY

Moringa oleifera is a plant that has been praised for its health benefits for thousands of years. It is very rich in healthy antioxidants and bioactive plant compounds. So far, scientists have only investigated a fraction of the many reputed health benefits. Here are the health benefits of *Moringa oleifera* that are supported by scientific research.

INTRODUCTION

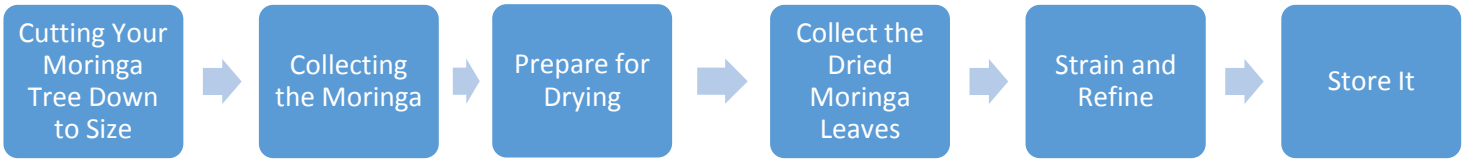
Moringa oleifera, native to India, grows in the tropical and subtropical regions of the world. It is commonly known as 'drumstick tree' or 'horseradish tree'. Moringa can withstand both severe drought and mild frost conditions and hence widely cultivated across the world. With its high nutritive values, every part of the tree is suitable for either nutritional or commercial purposes. The leaves are rich in minerals, vitamins and other essential phytochemicals. The scientific effort of this research provides insights on the use of moringa as a cure for diabetes and cancer and fortification of moringa in commercial products. This review explores the use of moringa across disciplines for its medicinal value and deals with cultivation, nutrition, commercial and prominent pharmacological properties of this "Miracle Tree".

Moringa leaves powder

Plantation and soil conditions

M. oleifera can be grown in any tropical and subtropical regions of the world with a temperature around 25–35 °C. It requires sandy or loamy soil with a slightly acidic to slightly alkaline pH and a net rainfall of 250–3000 mm. The direct seeding method is followed as it has high germination rates. Since moringa seeds are expected to germinate within 5–12 days after seeding and can be implanted at a depth of 2 cm in the soil. Moringa can also be propagated using containers. The saplings are placed in plastic bags containing sandy or loamy soil. After it grows to about 30 cm, it can be transplanted. However, utmost care has to be taken while transplanting as the tap roots are tender and tend to get affected. The tree can also be cultivated from cuttings with 1 m length and 4–5 cm in diameter, but these plants may not have a good deep root system. Such plants tend to be sensitive to drought and winds. For commercial purposes large scale intensive and semi-intensive plantation of moringa may be followed. In commercial cultivation, spacing is important as it helps in plant management and harvest. *M. oleifera* differs in nutrient composition at different locations.

Flowchart of Moringa Powder Processing:



Procedure:

- When your moringa tree has gotten nice and tall and has a significant number of branches, cut the main trunk of your moringa tree down to about 1 meter high. This will keep the tree bushier and easy to harvest in the future.
- Collect all of the branches into a pile. Tie them together at their base and hang them. Keep them out of the sun
- Spray them down with water to get any extra dirt/dust off and wait a few days until the leaves become dry and can easily fall off.
- Collect the dried moringa leaves into bowls or onto a sheet. Hint: minimize the amount of small sticks in the mix, it will make for a smoother powder.
- Place leaves in blender or grinder until the desired consistency is achieved.
- Use a strainer to sift out any unwanted sticks and large matter.
- Now you can put your moringa powder in containers or ziplocks. We like to use a vacuum sealer. Be sure and store your prized moringa in a dark cool spot to minimize nutrient breakdown.

What are the benefits?

Moringa is believed to have many benefits and its uses range from health and beauty to helping prevent and cure diseases. The benefits of moringa include:

- Protecting and nourishing skin and hair
- Treating edema
- Protecting the liver
- Preventing and treating cancer
- Treating stomach complaints
- Fighting against bacterial diseases
- Making bones healthier
- Treating mood disorders
- Protecting the cardiovascular system
- Helping wounds to heal
- Treating diabetes
- Treating asthma
- Protecting against kidney disorders
- Reducing high blood pressure
- Improving eye health
- Treating anemia and sickle cell disease

CONCLUSION

The research on M. oleifera is yet to gain importance in India. It is essential that the nutrients of this wonder tree are exploited for a variety of purposes. M. oleifera has great anti-diabetic and anti-cancer properties. However, double blind researches are less prevalent to further substantiate these properties of moringa.More studies are needed to corroborate the primary mechanisms of Moringa as ant diabetic and anticancer agents

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