

HEALTH BENEFITS OF BARLEY

Prevalence of lifestyle diseases is increasing day by day. Mostly the younger generation do not have much awareness about healthy nutritional supplements. One such important cereal grain not used mostly by youngsters is barley. It is a good old grain with so many health benefits like weight reduction, decreasing blood pressure, blood cholesterol, blood glucose in Type 2 diabetes and preventing colon cancer. It is easily available and cheap grain. It contains both soluble and insoluble fiber, protein, vitamins B and E, minerals selenium, magnesium and iron, copper, flavonoids and anthocyanins. Barley contains soluble fiber, beta glucan binds to bile acids in the intestines and thereby decreasing plasma cholesterol levels. Absorbed soluble fiber decreases cholesterol synthesis by liver and cleansing blood vessels. Insoluble fiber provides bulkiness in the intestines, thereby satiety, decreased appetite. It promotes intestinal movements relieving constipation, cleansing colonic harmful bacteria and reduced incidence of colonic cancer. It is a good source of niacin, reducing LDL levels and increasing HDL levels. Selenium and vitamin E providing beneficial antioxidant effects. Magnesium, a cofactor for many carbohydrate metabolism enzymes and high fiber content contributes for its blood glucose reducing effect in Type 2 diabetes. It is having good diuretic activity and is useful in urinary tract infections. Barley contains gluten, contraindicated in celiac disease.

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