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Why Pomegranates Are Great For Your Heart: A Cardiologist Explains



I'm constantly amazed at the power of the human body to heal itself if you stop harmful habits (such as smoking, eating high fat and processed foods, or consuming too much sugar). Another way to accelerate healing is by eating brightly colored plant-based foods.

Enter pomegranates. New science has shown that these fruits have powerful abilities to promote heart and artery health. Adding pomegranates to your diet can be an important step in maintaining youthfulness, as they're rich in antioxidants. They may also help HDL cholesterol in working more effectively to remove plaque from arteries.

For these reasons, a number of studies have been done on the effects of this unusual fruit and the results are startling. Here are four studies that just might make you believe in the power of pomegranates.

1. Dr. Dean Ornish and colleagues studied the effects of drinking 8 ounces a day of pomegranate juice (PJ) in patients with heart disease and abnormal stress tests. After one month, blood flow improved in those who drank PJ and worsened in a control group.

READ MORE AT THE JUICE BAR

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1. Dr. Dean Ornish and colleagues studied the effects of drinking 8 ounces a day of pomegranate juice (PJ) in patients with heart disease and abnormal stress tests. After three months, blood flow improved in those who drank PJ and worsened in a control group.

2. Scientists measured the amount of plaque in the carotid arteries of 10 patients for up to three years who were asked to drink eight ounces a day of PJ. Even after just one year, the amount of plaque decreased, blood pressure fell, and markers of inflammation and oxidation decreased, too. A larger study of 146 patients demonstrated the same findings limited to patients with the most oxidative stress.

3. In another experiment, thirteen men with high blood pressure were given five ounces of pomegranate juice. Six hours later, their blood pressure was reduced by 7%. Additionally, they showed signs of better artery function. A subsequent experiment over two weeks showed that blood pressure remained lower with daily pomegranate juice consumption.

4. Cholesterol was measured in 22 patients with diabetes who were given a concentrated pomegranate juice for eight weeks. Total and LDL cholesterol fell and was not explained by any other changes in diet.

I recommend to my patients that they eat more pomegranates and I prefer that they get the whole fruit, including all the fiber. Their second best option may be pomegranate juice.

There are many pomegranate tablets and capsules commercially available, but at least one study raised concerns over whether these have the active chemicals found in the whole fruit. Of 27 samples tested, only five had the profile of the whole pomegranate and five had none at all! So never take pomegranates for granted and enjoy their healing powers regularly.