

# 20 Best Benefits Of Cilantro For Skin, Hair And Health

SABA ON DECEMBER 18, 2014



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Cilantro, also known as coriander or dhania, is an aromatic herb with wide, delicate lacy leaves and a pungent smell. It belongs to the apiaceous family also known as the carrot family which comprises of plants like celery, parsley, cumin, parsnip and carrot. This herb has its origin in the Mediterranean and Asia Minor (Turkey) regions (1).

The plant grows up to a height of 1 to 2 feet and possesses dark green, hairless, soft leaves having a variable shape which are broad at the base of the plant, and slender and feathery higher on near the flowering stems. All parts of the plant are edible. Its fresh leaves and dried seeds are most widely used in cooking. Cilantro seeds are round to oval in shape, yellowish brown in colour with a flavour that is aromatic, sweet and citrus as well as slightly peppery. These seeds are commonly used as spice.

This Mediterranean herb forms a part of savoury dishes both in modern as well as traditional cuisines. Ancient Greeks used cilantro essential oil as an ingredient in perfumes whereas the Romans used this herb to mask the smell of rotten meat. Apart from its culinary uses, it has been found to possess certain notable plant derived chemical compounds which have disease preventing and health promoting properties. The leaves, roots and stems of cilantro plant have been found to have antiseptic and carminative properties.

## Cilantro Benefits

### Cilantro: Health Benefits

In addition to its fresh and aromatic flavour, cilantro is rich in vital vitamins and antioxidants like beta-carotene, vitamin C and folates, thus offering a variety of health benefits given below.

#### 1. Cardiovascular Health:

Cilantro herb is cholesterol free but rich in antioxidants, essential oils, vitamins and dietary fibre which help in lowering LDL or bad cholesterol and increasing HDL or good cholesterol levels. Thus, it is beneficial for cardiovascular health (2). It also helps dissolve cholesterol build up in the arteries, thus helping those suffering from atherosclerosis and heart disease.

## 2. Lowers Blood Pressure:

Apart from lowering LDL cholesterol, one of the benefits of cilantro can also reduce hypertension by lowering blood pressure. The herb is a good source of potassium, magnesium, calcium, manganese and iron as well as low in sodium. This high potassium and low sodium ratio helps control heart rate and blood pressure. Iron is vital for red blood cell production and manganese is used as a co factor for the antioxidant enzyme, *superoxide dismutase*.

## 3. Treats Anxiety:

Due to its muscle relaxing qualities, cilantro may act as a mild laxative. It helps in calming the nerves, thus relieving anxiety (3) and reducing the harmful effects of stress. Drinking cilantro juice mixed with cucumber and celery juices towards the end of the day is a great way to replenish your body with B vitamins to help calm the mind and enable you to de-stress.

## 4. Facilitates Peaceful Sleep:

By reducing anxiety and stress, cilantro helps in improving the quality of your sleep as it is a calming herb (4).

[ Read: [Green Almonds Uses](#) ]

## 5. Digestive Aid:

Cilantro leaves offer relief from indigestion problems as well as feelings of nausea. They enable the digestive tract to produce digestive enzymes as well as more digestive juices, thus preventing flatulence and settling queasy stomach (5). This herb also stimulates digestion through peristaltic action. Its antioxidant properties help in promoting healthy liver function. Cilantro leaves are a good source of roughage and fibre which help in relieving gastrointestinal problems.

## 6. Heavy Metal Detoxifier:

Cilantro is a remarkable heavy metal detoxifier or “chelation agent” as it has been found to remove heavy metals from the body. These metals usually enter the body through consumption of non-organic food, using conventional water supplies, eating fish, using deodorants, smoking, cooking in aluminum vessels or aluminum foil, taking over the counter drugs like antacids, using vaccines or metal fillings in teeth. They cause serious heart problems like cancer, brain deterioration, emotional problems, heart, kidney and lung diseases, and weak bones.

Cilantro has the ability to mobilize mercury from the brain and central nervous system by separating it from the fat tissue and transferring it into the blood and lymph where it gets removed safely in combination with blue green algae called spirulina. This combination provides relief from mercury poisoning and toxicity. Various chemical compounds in cilantro bind to toxic metals and facilitate their removal by loosening them from the tissues.

## 7. Anti-diabetic Properties:

Cilantro has been traditionally referred to as an “anti-diabetic” herb (6) due to its ability to lower cholesterol and blood sugar levels. It is particularly beneficial for diabetic patients as it helps in regulating and keeping their blood sugar stable due+ to its high potassium and low sodium ratio.

## 8. Anti-inflammatory Effects:

Cilantro possesses powerful anti-inflammatory capacities which can alleviate inflammatory conditions like arthritis (7) as well as reduce minor swelling. It also prevents conjunctivitis.

[ Read: [Apricot Health Benefits](#) ]

## 9. Antioxidant Properties:

The antioxidant properties of cilantro (8) can be attributed to the presence of an antioxidant called quercetin among others. These antioxidants protect your cells from against oxidative stress caused by free radicals, thus delaying the ageing process and preventing chronic diseases later on in life. The antioxidant activity in cilantro provides protection against the most degenerative diseases such as cancer, diabetes, macular degeneration, Alzheimer's disease and heart disease.

## **10. Anti-bacterial and Anti-fungal Properties:**

Cilantro contains an anti-bacteria compound called dodecenal which can kill salmonella bacteria and prevent salmonella poisoning (9). Its anti-bacterial properties help to improve oral health. The anti-microbial substances present in it help prevent and cure small pox as well as relive diarrhea if caused by fungal or microbial infections.

## **11. Natural Deodorant:**

Cilantro acts as a natural internal deodorant as it contains a large amount of chlorophyll that can detox the body from the inside out. By flushing out toxins from the liver, kidney and digestive tract, it helps to remove excess bacteria from the body that would otherwise set out and accumulate in your armpits and feet. Chlorophyll can inhibit bacteria due to its high oxygen content and therefore, this herb helps your body deodorize and smell great.

## **12. Aids in Weight Loss:**

This herb is great for obese people as it helps in the reduction of fats and therefore, aids in weight loss (10).

[ Read: [Raisins for Weight Loss](#) ]

## **13. Treatment of Menstrual Disorders:**

Cilantro seeds are a good source of linoleic acid, ascorbic acid, steric acid and palmitic acid. They support proper secretion of hormones and prevent menstrual disorders. For this purpose, they should be soaked overnight in water and consumed the next morning to get maximum benefits.

## **14. Other Benefits:**

Cilantro is a great source of essential vitamins and minerals. It is rich in iron which is beneficial for people with lower haemoglobin levels and cures anaemia. Magnesium, on the other hand, facilitates proper functioning of the nervous system and strengthens the bones. Chewing of raw cilantro leaves is helpful for people suffering from bronchitis and asthma (11). The oil extracted from cilantro has antiseptic properties that help in curing mouth ulcers.



Image: Getty

## **Cilantro: Skin Benefits**

We all long for a healthy glowing skin and it is a well-known fact that skin health depends upon internal health to a great extent. Just like the rest of the body, our skin also needs proper nutrition to maintain its health and minimize skin problems. For this purpose, it is important to maintain a balanced diet. Besides, certain external factors also adversely affect our skin such as exposure to UV rays, harsh chemical treatments, prolonged illness etc. As far as cilantro is concerned, it can be beneficial in skincare as it contains certain vital nutrients and minerals that are needed for a healthy skin.

### **15. Treatment of Blackheads and Acne:**

Cilantro juice is quite effective in getting rid of blackheads and acne (12). For this purpose, you can mix 1 teaspoon of cilantro juice with 1 teaspoon of lime juice. Apply it on the affected areas and leave for an hour. Wash off with warm water.

### **16. Treatment of Skin Disorders:**

Cilantro acts as a natural antiseptic and anti-fungal agent in the treatment of skin disorders like dermatitis (13) and eczema. It possesses anti-microbial substances which can prevent and cure small pox too.

[ Read: [Green Tea and Acne](#) ]

### **17. Good for Oily Skin:**

Cilantro can absorb excess oil from your face. If you have an oily skin, you can apply cilantro juice on your face and wash off after an hour.

### **18. Anti-ageing Benefits:**

As stated earlier, cilantro is rich in several antioxidants that prevent the free radicals from damaging the skin cells. Vitamin A is an important fat soluble vitamin and antioxidant that is vital for maintaining healthy mucus membranes and skin. Vitamin C is a powerful natural antioxidant that fights free radicals, thus preventing signs of ageing (14) such as wrinkles, sagging skin and pigmentation.

## 19. Lightens Dark Lips:

If you are suffering from dark lips, you can apply cilantro juice on your lips to lighten their colour.

## Cilantro: Hair Benefits

Proper supply of nutrients to the hair follicles is the key to maintaining a healthy scalp with lustrous locks. Though it seems unlikely, consuming and applying cilantro can be beneficial for your hair as well.

## 20. Combats Hair Loss:

Cilantro juice is a wonderful remedy for promoting new hair growth and combating hair loss as it contains essential vitamins and proteins which help in hair growth. You can make a paste from fresh cilantro leaves using few drops of water and extracting its juice. Apply this on your scalp for an hour before shampooing. This pack should be used twice a week for 2 to 3 weeks to get effective results. Alternatively, you can infuse your hair oil with a powder made from cilantro seeds while massaging your hair. You can also prepare a hair rinse by boiling a bunch of cilantro leaves in water and cooling it.

## Cilantro: Nutritional Value

Cilantro ( <i>Coriandrum sativum</i> ), Fresh, Nutrient value per 100 g		
(Source:USDA National Nutrient data base)		
Principle	Nutrient Value	Percentage of RDA
Energy	23 Kcal	1%
Carbohydrates	3.67 g	3%
Protein	2.13 g	4%
Total Fat	0.52 g	2%
Cholesterol	0 mg	0%
Dietary Fiber	2.80 g	6.5%
Vitamins		
Folates	62 µg	15.5%
Niacin	1.114 mg	7%
Pantothenic acid	0.570 mg	11%
Pyridoxine	0.149 mg	11%
Riboflavin	0.162 mg	12%
Thiamin	0.067 mg	5.5%

Vitamin A	6748 IU	225%
Vitamin C	27 mg	45%
Vitamin E	2.50 mg	17%
Vitamin K	310 mcg	258%
<b>Electrolytes</b>		
Sodium	46 mg	3%
Potassium	521 mg	11%
<b>Minerals</b>		
Calcium	67 mg	7%
Iron	1.77 mg	22%
Magnesium	26 mg	6.5%
Manganese	0.426 mg	18.5%
Phosphorus	48 mg	7%
Selenium	0.9 mg	2%
Zinc	0.50 mg	4.5%
<b>Phyto-nutrients</b>		
Carotene- $\alpha$	36 $\mu$ g	–
Carotene- $\beta$	3930 $\mu$ g	–
Crypto-xanthin- $\beta$	202 $\mu$ g	–
Lutein-zeaxanthin	865 $\mu$ g	–

Cilantro has an amazing nutritional value (15). This herb is loaded with vitamins A, K and C, minerals, such as iron, calcium and magnesium, and has more antioxidants than most fruits and vegetables. Its nutritional value is explained below.

**Calories:** Cilantro is calorie and fat free. Nine sprigs of this herb provide just 5 calories.

**Antioxidants:** The leaves and stem tips of this herb are rich in antioxidant polyphenolic flavonoids such as *quercetin*, *kaempferol*, *rhamnetin* and *egignenin*. These phytochemicals as well as essential oils render it usable in many traditional medicines as an analgesic, antispasmodic, carminative, deodorant, depurative, digestive, fungicidal and stimulant.

**Vitamins:** Cilantro contains many vital vitamins like folic acid, riboflavin, niacin, vitamin A, vitamin C, vitamin K and beta carotene. Vitamin C is a powerful antioxidant. A 100 grams serving of cilantro leaves provide 30% of the recommended daily allowance (RDA) of vitamin C. It also provides 6748 IU of vitamin A which is about 225% of RDA. Cilantro is one of the richest herbal sources of vitamin K with 100 grams of this herb providing 258% of the RDA. Vitamins A and flavonoids provide protection from lung and oral cavity cancers. Vitamin K plays an important role in bone mass building by promoting osteotropic activity in the bones

**Minerals:** Cilantro is a good source of minerals like potassium, calcium, manganese, iron and magnesium.

**Volatile Oils:** The leaves and seeds of cilantro contain essential volatile oils such as *borneol*, *cinol*, *linalool*, *cymene*, *terpineol*, *dipentene*, *phellandrene*, *pinene* and *terpinolene*.