

Quinoa: The super grain

Super grain
Quinoa was first cultivated over 5,000 years ago and it was called mother of all grains. This plant based gluten free protein is pronounced as 'Keen Waa'. In this article we will try to uncover the health and beauty secrets behind these super crops.

Quinoa may hold the secret to youthful wrinkle-free skin
You can use the best skin care products, but for flawless skin you need to feed it from the inside out. These tiny seeds are the unsung beauty hero in the world of seeds as they supply skin healthy vitamins and minerals. The antioxidants present in quinoa protect the skin from the harmful effects of free radicals and help to delay natural ageing process. The vitamin C rich food encourages the formation of collagen and helps to rejuvenate the skin. It is packed with good fats which have a hydrating and nourishing effect on your skin.

Hair healthy protein
An added bonus is that these seeds contain a healthy dose of fibre and essential amino acids, making it a complete protein, similar to animal protein. Half cup of quinoa provides 4 grams of protein which is beneficial in combating hair loss, strengthens



the follicles and makes the hair strong and healthy.
Weight maintenance food
Eating healthy and losing weight seems downright impossible for many of us. Ensure that your goals are met by emphasising these foods as part of a balanced diet as well as natural fat burner. Surprisingly quinoa packs a powerful punch in promoting weight loss. A healthy breakfast rich in

protein, fibres and good fats that gives you energy and makes you feel full.
Heart health
Grains like quinoa have long been touted for their healthy heart promoting properties. Eating quinoa can lower your bad cholesterol. The high fibre content of quinoa helps facilitate digestion, balance blood sugar level, decrease unhealthy low-

density lipoprotein or LDL. This makes them a healthy addition to a low calorie diet to help decrease high blood pressure and reduce the risk of heart disease and stroke.
Remedy for the diabetics
Studies have shown that increasing consumption of plant protein decreases the risk of diabetes, increases energy and overall lower weight. Quinoa is consid-

ered low on the glycemic index scale. People with diabetes should first make sure that they have a regular eating routine. A meal menu containing quinoa provides your body with consistent fuel, helps to control your blood sugar and monitor insulin level.

Better overall health
It is recommended to consume 50 grams of whole grains per day, here quinoa is your top pick. This nutritionally dense grain is packed with iron, copper, calcium, magnesium, riboflavin, thiamin and folate.

Furthermore, taking quinoa with raw vegetables that contain sulfur could help you maximise the benefits. The fibre filled grains ease the problem of indigestion largely. Plant-based foods that are high in antioxidants are at the top of the anti-inflammatory foods list.

Quinoa is high in antioxidants and it is recommended for those who are arthritic. People who are gluten intolerant can have a hard time getting all of their essential micro and macronutrients. Quinoa is very well balanced, offering a vast array of micro and macronutrients.

A lot of people might not be aware of the magic of quinoa, but they have been used for centuries for their great health virtues. Because this super hero is such a beneficial food, try to find a different way to eat it every day.

MEASLES

Deaths declined, but still counting

In 2016, an estimated 90,000 people died from measles — an 84% drop from more than 550,000 deaths in 2000 — according to a new report published today by leading health organisations. This marks the first time global measles deaths have fallen below 100,000 per year.

"Saving an average of 1.3 million lives per year through measles vaccine is an incredible achievement and makes a world free of measles seem possible, even probable, in our lifetime," says Dr Robert Linkins, of the Measles and Rubella Initiative (MR&I) and Branch Chief of Accelerated Disease Control and Vaccine Preventable Diseases at the Centres for Disease Control and Prevention. M&RI is a partnership formed in 2001 of the American Red Cross, the US Centres for Disease Control and Prevention, the United Nations Foundation, UNICEF, and WHO.

Since 2000, an estimated 5.5 billion doses of measles-containing vaccines have been provided to children through routine immunisation services and mass vaccination campaigns, saving an estimated 20.4 million lives.

The world is still far from reaching regional measles elimination goals. Coverage with the first of two required doses of measles vaccine has stalled at approximately 85% since 2009, far short of the 95% coverage needed to stop measles infections, and coverage with the second dose, despite recent increases, was only 64% in 2016.

Far too many children — 20.8 million — are still missing their first measles vaccine dose. Since it is a highly contagious viral disease, large outbreaks continue to occur in many countries, putting children at risk of severe health complications such as pneumonia, diarrhoea, encephalitis, blindness, and death.

Source: World Health Organisation

HEALTH bulletin



Pollution linked to 9 million deaths worldwide in 2015

Pollution is linked to an estimated 9 million deaths each year worldwide — equivalent to 1 in 6 (16%) of all deaths, according to a major new report in The Lancet. Most of these deaths were due to non-communicable diseases caused by pollution such as heart disease, stroke, lung cancer and chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD).

The report finds that pollution as a result of outdoor and indoor air pollution, water and soil contamination, and chemical pollutants is one of the largest risk factors for premature death. With almost all of these deaths (92%) occurring in low- and middle-income countries, and pollution disproportionately affecting the poor and marginalised in every country worldwide, the authors of the report aim to end neglect of the issue across the political spectrum, and mobilise the will, resources, and the leadership needed to confront it.

The Lancet Commission on Pollution and Health is a two-year project that has involved more than 40 international health and environmental authors.

Birth weight and growth of our babies — where are we?



Prof M Karim Khan

Taking weight at birth is very important and it dictates the physician what measurement to be taken soon after birth to reduce the morbidity and mortality of neonate.

At least 22.6% of babies are born with low birth weight (below 2.5 Kg) in Bangladesh, according to a national survey. The report of National Low Birth Weight Survey Bangladesh 2015 showed that the rate of intrauterine growth restriction (IUGR), was 72.9% because of high rate of adolescent pregnancy.

The rate of caesarean section also alarmingly rose to 35.5%, according to the survey, conducted by National Nutrition Services under the Institute of Public Health Nutrition. The major causes of low birth weight (LBW) are premature birth, poor nutritional status of mother and inadequate nutritional intake during pregnancy, and intrauterine growth restriction, according to the World Health Organisation.

Well, before discussing LBW, we need to know how many newborns are being weighed at birth in our country? Data is not available but worldwide 48% newborn are not being weighed at birth. Definitely percentage in Bangladesh will not be less than that.

Weight of the baby is related to many factors, but gestational age (duration of pregnancy) is one of

the most important ones. Less duration of pregnancy results in less weight of the newborn. Maternal nutrition during pregnancy, number of pregnancy, mother's age, parity, mother's disease like hypertension, heart diseases, chronic kidney diseases etc. are important causes of LBW. A diabetic mother gives birth to a large baby. Newborn weight less than 2,500 grams means LBW, less than 1,500 grams means very LBW, less than 1,000 grams very very LBW and weight less than 750 grams means incredible LBW.

Normal duration pregnancy is 37 weeks to 42 weeks, less than 37 weeks means premature birth, and more than 42 weeks means post mature baby. Management depends on duration of pregnancy and birth weight. If duration of pregnancy is more than 34 weeks and birth weight is around 2.5 Kg, the outcome is good; but if the duration of pregnancy is less 34 weeks and

weight is around 1,500 grams, the outcome is guarded. These babies need special care in special unit under experienced paediatrician or neonatologist. It is expensive as well. If LBW babies cannot suck well, they require tube feeding of expressed breast milk. Important causes of mortality of LBW newborns are sepsis, birth asphyxia, metabolic problems, neonatal jaundice etc.

So all LBW newborns should be born in hospitals where reasonable facilities and manpower are available. If we can reduce LBW, our newborn death will be reduced; on the other hand infant mortality will be reduced. Maternal education, periodic antenatal check up and social awareness are needed to reduce LBW and newborn death.

The author is a Professor of Paediatrics at Community Based Medical College, Mymensingh. E-mail: mmukkhann@gmail.com



PHOTO: COURTESY

Improving sexual and reproductive health and rights knowledge

STAR HEALTH REPORT

The Population Council has conducted a unique evaluation study titled "Evaluation of the Effectiveness of the HERhealth Model for Improving Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights Knowledge and Access of Female Garment Factory Workers in Bangladesh" in Bangladesh to examine the effectiveness of the model. The dissemination of the study took place recently in Dhaka, says a press release.

The study found notable increases in Sexual and Reproductive Health (SRH)-related knowledge indicators (i.e. the risk period for pregnancy, safe sexual practices, menstrual hygiene, and SRH service delivery points) in HERhealth factories.

Even after the HERhealth intervention, SRH service delivery point knowledge has decreased from 83% to 77% in HERhealth factories. This indicates an area in which HERhealth can make improvements in the future.



/StarHealthBD



Keep Calm and Check Your Blood Pressure

No medical checkup is complete without getting your blood pressure measured. Pressure that stays too high for too long can damage blood vessels and greatly increase your risk of a heart attack, a stroke, or kidney damage. On the bright side, this simple test can give you the information you need to help prevent and control high blood pressure.

Why do I need to check my blood pressure?

If you have high blood pressure, you may need to check your pressure every day, not just every time you see your doctor. Daily at-home measurements can help you track the effectiveness of your treatments. And because blood pressure can change from day to day (and even hour to hour), daily testing can give you a more accurate idea of your typical pressure.

