

Uses of Grams in Siddha System – A Review

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Introduction

In India, pulses like Bengal gram, Black gram, Cow-gram, Field-beans, Green-gram, Horse-gram, Khesari-dal, lentils are consumed largely. Pulses are indeed a good and cheap source of bulk-food, that supplies energy, proteins, minerals and vitamins. The different grams and its uses are discussed in this review article.

Grams

1. Field gram (*Phaseolus trilobus*)

Among the gram varieties, field gram is the best, though it causes vatha diseases. It cures deranged kapha, anorexia and mental disorders.

2. Green gram (*Phaseolus radiatus*)

Green gram which has cold potency cures mental disorders, but produces vatham.

3. Chowlee beans

It cause indigestion and delirium.

4. White gram

It cures vatha diseases.

5. Black gram (*Phaseolus mungo glabera*)

It cures diseases of vatha, kapha and hemiplegia. These grams should be fried gently, pounded and the cleaned dhals should be used.

Field gram (*Phaseolus trilobates*) soaked in water and ground may be used to prepare dosai. This is also used to prepare vegetable curry. This can also be consumed after soaking in water. During special occasions this is used to prepare vadai-dhal. This can also be consumed as gruel.

6. Black gram (*Phaseolus mungo*)

Black gram has two varieties namely small and big varieties, of which small variety is the best. It should be cleaned well to remove the stones and mud and fried gently in gingelly oil. Then it is split into two with a stone machine and the epicaps are removed. It has the qualities of sweet taste, greasiness, heaviness and hot potency. It reduces vatha disorders. Good black gram causes derangement of kaphavatham, indigestion, strengthen the pelvis and increases vigour. It also cures tuberculosis and mental disorders. Black gram soaked in water and ground is widely used to make idly, vadai and other eatables. As it strengthens the pelvis, this is fried and ground and made into a thick paste by adding ghee and sugar and is usually given to the girls who have attained puberty. If this is consumed as adai, it increases vatha and pitha and causes digestive disorders. But it is good to consume vadai along with food. If the vadai made of the black gram is soaked in fermented curd and consumed along with honey, it cures the derangement of pitha and kapha humour. The vatha humour will not aggravate. Vadai made by adding plaintain fruit (*Musa oxtilis* - A kind of thick skin banana) with black gram vadai and if it is consumed with ghee, the three humours will remain in their normal states.

7. Bengal gram (*Cicer arietinum*), Cow pea (*Vigna cajlang*), Garden pea (*Pisum sativum*)

The above pulses have the qualities of dryness and softness. They aggravate vatha. These are boiled and consumed as snacks (sundal). One of these is soaked in water for 6 hours, washed and boiled adding a pinch of turmeric powder and then fried with asafoetida, garlic, mustard and chillies. This is an ideal food for breakfast.

8. Bengal gram (*Cicer arietinum*)

It cause indigestion, thirst due to pitham, diarrhoea, associated intestinal disorders, giddiness, haemorrhoids and nullifies the effects of medicines.

9. Cow pea (*Vigna catjang*)

Chowlee bean if consumed in excess, reduces digestive power causes indigestion, diarrhoea, kapha diseases and rheumatic diseases.

10. Dolichos (*Hyacinth bean*)

Possessing the qualities of dryness and softness, dolichos aggravates vatha. This is consumed also as 'Sundal'.

11. Horse gram (*Dolichos biflorus*):

Horse gram has astringent and sweet taste and its potency is hot. It reduces libido. It causes orchitis, gastric ulcers, due to pitha and insanity. It cures the pain due to vatha, sinusitis and fever with rigor. It reduces the efficacy of medicines. If it is consumed as soup, it is beneficial. It strengthens the body and cures vatha diseases, increased pitham, diarrhoea, gastric ulcer, asthma, cough, diseases of eye and rhinitis.

Conclusion

Food is important for life. To be healthy and active, we should certainly have enough food. But the foods we should also be safe and rich in all nutrients our body needs. Thus the Grams is having enough nutrients to provide good health to our body.

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