

The significance of apricot in human health and nutrition

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Although the apricot [*Armeniaca vulgaris* L. (*Prunus Armeniaca* L.)] that belongs to the genus *Armeniaca* of the Rosaceae family is poor in providing the daily energy and protein requirements of the human body, it is a very rich potassium and β -carotene source. β -carotene, the precursor of vitamin A, is necessary for the functions of epithelial tissue that surrounds the organs, eye health, bone and tooth development and endocrine glands. Vitamin A also plays an important role in growth and reproduction, and resistance of the body against infections. Another important function of vitamin A is that it could prevent the formation of singlet oxygen, which is responsible from the transformation of normal body cells into cancer cells, or its ability to neutralize singlet oxygen after it is formed. Furthermore, vitamin A enhances the resistance of the

organism and the healthy cells, thus protecting the body against cancer. This preventive activity is even more significant with the users of tobacco and alcohol. It was reported that apricot has positive effects on heart failure, kidney diseases, treatment of hepatitis and cirrhosis due to its rich sodium and poor potassium content. One of the most important components of apricot for nutrition and health purposes is dietary fiber. Dietary fiber reduces the risk of diseases such as constipation, appendicitis, hemorrhoids, dental diseases, obesity, diabetes, coronary heart diseases and colon cancer, and ensures the regular intestine functions.

Biography

Zeliha Selamoglu is a Professor in Medical Biology department at Ömer Halisdemir University, Turkey. She completed her PhD in Biology at Inonu University and has published over 70 peer reviewed journal articles with over 500 citations and many technical reports. She is a member of Society for Experimental Biology and Medicine. She has served as Editorial Board Member for many journals.

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