



FENUGREEK SEEDS

Active Constituents :

28% mucilage; 22% proteids; 5% of a stronger-smelling, bitter fixed oil.

Alkaloides : Trimethylamine, Neurin, Trigonelline, Choline, Gentianine, Carpaine and Betain.

Amino acids : Isoleucine, 4-Hydroxyisoleucine, Histidine, Leucine, Iysine, L-tryptophan, Argenine.

Saponins : Graecunins, fenugrin B, fenugreekine, trigofoenosides A-G.

Steroidal sapinogens : Yamogenin, diosgenin, smilagenin, sarsasapogenin, tigogenin, neotigogenin, gitogenin, neogitogenin, yuccagenin.

Fiber : Gum, neutral detergent. Ffiber

Other : Coumarin, lipids, vitamins, minerals.

What are Fenugreek Seeds?

The seeds of a leguminous plant eaten as a vegetable. The seeds are used as a condiment or seasoning. The flavor of these seeds are mildly bitter and at the same time are slightly sweet. The seeds are rhombic in shape and usually they are yellow to amber in color. The Arabic word hulb (Helba in Egypt) for the seed resembles its Mandarin Chinese counterpart hu lu ba.

Fenugreek is regarded as a herb native to the semi-arid regions of southeastern Europe, northern Africa, and western Asia, but is widely cultivated in other parts of the world. The word 'fenugreek' is derived from the two Latin words 'foenum-graecum' meaning Greek hay. It is known as Methi or Mithi in Hindi.



Availability of Fenugreek Seeds

Fenugreek Seeds are easily procurable in the grocery store as whole and ground. Fenugreek seeds should be stored in a cool, dark place for no more than 6 months.

Historical Evidence

Though the research as to from which wild strain of the genus Trigonella led to the domestication fenugreek has been quite inconclusive, yet based on the available evidence it can be speculated to have originated somewhere in the far East. The following finding have documented the above conclusion: -



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* Charred fenugreek seeds have been recovered from Tell Halal, Iraq, (radiocarbon dating to 4000 BC)

* Charred fenugreek seeds have also been recovered from Bronze Age levels of Lachish

* Dehydrated or powdered variety of fenugreek seeds have been recovered from the tomb of Tutankhamen

* Cato the Elder, an eminent Roman statesman enlisted fenugreek with clover and vetch as crops grown to feed cattle.

Nutritional and Medicinal Properties

The chemical components of fenugreek seed include iron, vitamin A, vitamin B1, vitamin C, phosphates, flavonoids, saponins, trigonelline, and other alkaloids. The seed is also high in fiber and protein.

Fenugreek seeds are high on polysaccharide galactomannan. They are also a rich source of

saponins such as diosgenin, yamogenin, gitogenin, tigogenin, and neotigogens. Other bioactive constituents of fenugreek include mucilage, volatile oils, and alkaloids such as choline and trigonelline. It is exztensively recommended as a galactagogue (milk producing agent) for nursing mothers to increase



inadequate breast milk supply. Supplements of fenugreek seeds are prescribed to lower serum cholesterol, triglyceride, and low-density lipoprotein in human patients.

Egyptian, ayurvedic Indian, Greek, and Roman medical practitioners have since the earliest times have used it as an aphrodisiac and as a remedy for colds and sore throats, indigestion, and other complaints. Lydia Pinkham included fenugreek in her famous 19th century "Vegetable Compound" nostrum for menstrual aches.

In present times fenugreek seeds are used referred to in case of menopausal complaints, heart disease, weight control and diabetes.



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