



Philip Lai Qi Gong Association

November Newsletter 2019

My dear QiGong friends:

This autumn I have been lucky to have another bumper crop of lovely organic pears from the tree in my backyard. Not only are they delicious, they have a lot of health benefits.



Health Benefits of Pears

Pears are a good source of phenolic phytonutrients which have antioxidant and anti-inflammatory properties. A diet including pears can help the body repair the daily damage of life. Pears are easy to digest, low in acid compared with many other fruits and are well tolerated by people with allergies.

The skin of pears has four times the phytonutrients of the flesh, in addition to being a good source of fibre. The fibre in pears has been shown to reduce the concentration of bile acids in the gut, which it is believed can lower the risk of colorectal, esophageal and stomach cancer. Pear fibre is believed to have an effect of reducing blood cholesterol, which may prevent heart disease. The extra fibre in pears plus the pectin makes them an ideal constipation remedy. The juice of pears can also be consumed regularly to help with constipation.

Pears also contain flavonoids which are associated with a reduced risk of Type 2 diabetes. If pears are combined with apples, this anti-diabetes effect is even stronger. The low glycemic index of pears means that they are digested and absorbed more slowly by the body. This produces a more gradual rise in glucose and insulin levels which is beneficial for diabetics.

Pears are a source of the element boron, which helps the body retain calcium and is essential to maintain the strength of the bones.

Pears have a cooling effect which can reduce fever. A tall glass of pear juice is especially soothing for a sore throat. Drinking pear juice is also a good way to build up your immune system if you feel a cold coming on.

Selecting and Storing Pears

Look for pears that are firm, but not too hard. They should have a smooth skin that is free of bruises or mold. The color of good quality pears may not be uniform as some may feature red-brown speckled patches on the skin. This is an acceptable characteristic and reflects a more intense flavor. Pears in the grocery store are usually picked when unripe and so will need to be ripened a bit before eating (unless you like them very firm). A ripe pear will give slightly when you press near the stem. If the pear is extremely soft to the point of being squishy, the fruit is over-ripe and should be used for cooking instead of being eaten raw. To ripen very firm pears, put them in a paper bag for a few days outside the refrigerator. Try to avoid storing pears near strong odours as they will absorb the smell. Of course if you can get fresh organic pears, these are the best for taste and have the benefit of not being sprayed by pesticides or affected by things like ground water contamination. Organic pears may not be perfectly smooth and may have some blemishes but these can be easily cut away if you are very picky.

Serving Suggestions for Pears

<https://www.thepennyhoarder.com/save-money/what-to-do-with-overripe-pears/>

- 1) Use them in a salad with mustard greens, leeks (or red onion) and walnuts
- 2) Serve them in a dessert with feta cheese or bleu cheese
- 3) Core them, cut them up and add them to vegetable broth to make soup with sliced carrot
- 4) Add chopped pears to oatmeal porridge with cinnamon and honey for breakfast
- 5) Make concentrated pear juice by boiling about a dozen chopped pears in two litres of water for about 45 minutes with medium heat. Strain out the solid residue and refrigerate the liquid.

I will give away some of my organic pears in the next four weeks of the Saturday morning Qi Gong class at McNabb. Come and sample this wonderful fruit.

For more info, please email: philip.lai@rogers.com or visit our website: www.philiplaigong.ca