



Isabgol (Psyllium Husk): Medicinal Benefits

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Psyllium husk or isabgol husk is a natural polymer. It consists of the epidermal and adjacent collapsed layers removed from the seeds of the plant *Plantago ovata Forsk.* (*P. ispaghula Roxb.*). It is rich in fibre and mucilage. Mucilage is a colourless gelling agent capable of expanding in volume as it absorbs water up to 40 times its weight. Dietary fibre obtained from psyllium husk may be used in processed foods, as an ingredient of foods, and as pharmacological supplements.

Isabgol Nutritional Value

Isabgol is high in fibre. It has 30-70% of insoluble and soluble fibres. The 100 gm Isabgol calorie content includes:

- Protein: 5 gm
- Fat: 6 gm
- Saturated fats: 2.5 gm
- Total carbohydrates: 75 gm
- Sugar: 30 gm
- Iron: 50 mg
- Calcium: 2 mg

Common Isabgol benefits include the following:

- Removes toxins from the body
- Adds a protective lining to the stomach that helps in curing acidity
- Promotes the growth of healthy gut bacteria
- Boosts digestion
- Regulates cholesterol levels
- Regulates sugar level
- Lowers blood pressure

Isabgol uses in the following conditions are beneficial:

1. Isabgol for Irritable Bowel Syndrome (IBS)

Irritable bowel syndrome is a disease related to the digestive system, which mainly occurs because of low fibre content in the diet. It leads to abdominal pain, bloating, flatulence, indigestion and bowel irregularities.

2. Isabgol for Heart Health

Isabgol supports heart health and ensures a reduced risk of developing heart disease. Isabgol is rich in fibres, and as per a study, if you consume 5-10 grams of soluble fibres daily, it will reduce 5-10 points of cholesterol level. It promotes the breakdown and absorption of bad cholesterol.

3. Isabgol for Diabetes

As per a study, isabgol can regulate sugar levels in people with diabetes. It reduces sugar spikes and also increases the absorption of anti-diabetic medications. Also, as per a study, a daily intake of 5 gm of isabgol twice a day can control blood sugar levels in people with type 2 diabetes.

4. Isabgol for Piles

Many people suffer from piles because of constipation for a prolonged period. The absorbing and water-retaining property of psyllium husk benefits people with piles. Isabgol makes the stool bulky, soft and easy to expel. It also reduces the bleeding associated with piles.

5. Isabgol for Loose Motion

Isabgol manages diarrhoea by absorbing water from the intestine and making stool thick. It slows down while passing through the colon and normalises bowel movements.

6. Isabgol for Weight Loss

The high fibre content of Isabgol helps in controlling weight. Isabgol essentially slows down the stomach-emptying process. As per a study, It makes you feel satiated and reduces your appetite, and you feel less hungry in between meals. It also prevents frequent snacking. Isabgol also helps in the management of fat by reducing bad cholesterol and controlling the overall calorie intake of the body.

7. Isabgol in Pregnancy

Isabgol benefits women during pregnancy and breastfeeding. It helps relieve gastric issues that arise during pregnancy, like indigestion and constipation. But as Isabgol is a laxative, it should not be consumed with a high-fibre diet as it can lead to loose motions.

8. Isabgol Benefits for Sperm

Nutrients are important for sperm health. They play an important role in treating male infertility and low sperm count. It also boosts libido. Isabgol benefits male sperm by multiplying the count. It also thickens the semen and prolongs orgasm. Isabgol can also help with premature ejaculation.

9. Isabgol Benefits for Skin

- Helps with acne and pimples
- Unclogs pores
- Prevents whiteheads and blackheads
- Reduces inflammation
- Treats skin irritation and insect bites

10. Isabgol Benefits for Hair

A balanced diet and healthy body functions affect hair health from the inside. For hair health, a healthy digestive system is a must. It helps supply essential nutrients to the hair roots that promote hair growth. Psyllium husk benefits hair by removing harmful toxins from the body and boosting digestion.

11. Isabgol Use for Constipation

Isabgol is known for its laxative effects. As per a study, the fibre content of Isabgol helps manage constipation. It has both soluble and insoluble fibres that expand in the stomach. They absorb and retain water that adds bulk to the stools. It softens the stool and makes it easy to pass out. Isabgol also stimulates contractions in the intestine that makes stool expulsion easy. Isabgol with milk at night benefits to relieve constipation.

References

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