



Grapes

One of the popular among everyday fruits, grapes are widely viewed in many cultures as "the queen of fruits" since earlier times. These tiny berries of Europe and

Mediterranean regions are the storehouse of numerous health promoting phyto-nutrients such as poly-phenolic antioxidants, vitamins, and minerals.

Botanically, they are small, round berries growing in clusters on a perennial and deciduous woody vine in the genus, *Vitis*. Today, they are widely cultivated under supervised orchards and vineyards

all around the world.

Each grape berry features semi-translucent flesh encased inside a smooth, thin skin. Some varieties contain edible seeds, while others are seedless. The color of the berry is because of the presence of poly-phenolic pigments in them. Red or purple berries are rich in anthocyanins while white-green berries contain more of tannins, especially, catechin. Interestingly, these antioxidant compounds are densely concentrated in the skin and seeds!

Health benefits of grapes

- Grapes are rich in **resveratrol**. Resveratrol plays a protective role against cancers of colon and prostate, coronary heart disease (CHD), degenerative nerve disease, Alzheimer's disease and viral/ fungal infections.
- Anthocyanins are another class of polyphenolic anti-oxidants present abundantly in the red grapes. These phyto-chemicals have been found to have an anti-allergic, anti-inflammatory, anti-microbial, as well as anti-cancer activity.
- **Catechins**, a type of flavonoid tannin group of anti-oxidants, found in the white/green varieties have also shown to possess these health-protective functions.
- Grapes are very low in calories. 100 g fresh grapes just provide 69 calories but zero cholesterol levels.
- Grapes are rich source of micronutrient minerals like copper, iron and manganese.
- They are an also good source of **vitamin-C**, vitamin A, vitamin K, carotenes, B-complex vitamins such as pyridoxine, riboflavin, and thiamin.