



The pear is native to coastal and mildly temperate regions of the Old World, from western Europe and north Africa east right across Asia. It is a medium-sized tree, reaching 33–56 ft. tall, often with a tall, narrow crown. The many different varieties of pears commonly found in U.S. groceries all belong to the same category known as European Pear (*Pyrus communis*). These pears typically have a rounded body that tapers into a neck of various lengths. Pears are found in a variety of colors, including many different shades of green, red, yellow/gold, and brown. Recent studies have shown that the skin of pears contains at least three to four times as many phenolic phytonutrients as the flesh. These phytonutrients include antioxidant, anti-inflammatory flavonoids, and potentially anti-cancer phytonutrients like cinnamic acids. The skin of the pear has also been shown to contain about half of the pear's total dietary fiber.

As a very good source of dietary fiber, pears might logically be expected to help protect us from development of type 2 diabetes (or DM2, which stands for "diabetes mellitus type 2) as well heart disease. Adequate intake of dietary fiber is a long-established factor in reducing our risk of both diseases, and in the case of pears, this benefit may be even more pronounced due to the helpful combination of both soluble and insoluble fiber in this fruit.

Pears