The health benefits of eating Kuttu Ka Aata or Buckwheat Flour during the Navratri season

New Delhi, 28th March 2017: Navratri is the detoxification of a person’s body, mind and soul. During this time wheat flour is omitted from a person’s diet and replaced with buckwheat flour or kuttu ka aata to help cleanse one’s body. Buckwheat is not a cereal grain but is derived from fruits and hence is a good substitute for cereals.

Explaining the health benefits of buckwheat flour Padma Shri Awardee Dr KK Aggarwal, National President, Indian Medical Association (IMA) and President Heart Care Foundation of India (HCFI) said, “Kuttu Ka Aata or buckwheat flour is extremely high in protein and is a wonderful substitute for those who are allergic to gluten (found in wheat). It is rich in magnesium, vitamin B, iron, calcium, folate, zinc, copper, manganese and phosphorus. It also contains phytonutrient rutin, which lowers cholesterol and blood pressure. It is also recommended to patients suffering from celiac disease.”

As the buckwheat hulls are hard to chew, traditionally they are soaked for about six hours and then cooked to make them softer and easily digestible. As the flour is gluten-free, a potato is used to bind the flour together. It is important to remember that we should not make pooris with hydrogenated oils or vanaspati as doing so will take away all the medical benefits of consuming buckwheat flour. Pooris made from buckwheats flour are crunchier than the normal wheat flour pooris. Instead of poori or pakodas (fried items) made from kuttuatta (buckwheat flour), eat kuttuki roti. One can also prepare idli from the kuttuatta (buckwheat flour) and dosa from the samak rice.

Some health benefits of consuming buckwheat flour include:

1. Kuttu is 75% of complex carbohydrates and 25% of high quality protein, which makes it an ideal food for weight loss.
2. It also contains alpha linolenic acid, which enhances HDL cholesterol (“good” cholesterol) and controls LDL cholesterol (“bad” cholesterol).
3. It is a good source of insoluble fiber and prevents occurrences of gallbladder stones. According to the American Journal of Gastroenterology, a 5% increase in the insoluble fiber intake results in a 10% reduced risk of gall-bladder stones.
4. Being high in fiber and with low glycemic index it is good substitute for diabetic patients. The glycemic Index for buckwheat is 47 (Low GI foods have a GI value less than 55; medium GI foods have a GI value between 55 and 69 and high GI foods have GI value greater than 70).

5. The chiro-inositol present in the buckwheat has been identified as the diabetes-preventing component.

Buckwheat flour however is subjected to adulteration and it is important to purchase form a credible source. Leftover flour must also not be used from the previous year as it may lead to food poisoning.

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About IMA: Indian Medical Association is the only representative, national voluntary organization of Doctors of Modern Scientific System of Medicine, which looks after the interest of doctors as well as the well being of the community at large. It has its Headquarter in Delhi and State / Terr. Branches in 30 States and Union Territories. It has over 2, 60,000 doctors as its members through more than 1765 active local branches spread across the country.

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