

There is no need for medicine when you eat millets, says Khadar Vali

Speaking at India Today Conclave Mumbai, Khadar Vali aka 'Millet Man of India' talked about the high nutritional value of millets and why people don't need medicine when they eat this "super grain."



India Today Health Desk

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'Millet Man of India' Khadar Vali at India Today Conclave Mumbai 2023. (Photo: Chandradeep Kumar/India Today)

Khadar Vali, who is known as the 'Millet Man of India', opened up about the nutritional benefits of millets at India Today Conclave in Mumbai. He said that there's no need for medicine if one incorporates millet into their diet.

"When your food is right, there's no need for medicine. When your food is wrong, no medicine works. The corporatisation of food is the reason why millets disappeared. It was my intent to bring them back to human consciousness again," said Khadar Vali, who returned to India in 1997 and has been advocating the consumption of millets in place of rice and wheat.

He added that given that the medical world has been grappling for medicine supplies, if people start eating millet, there's no need for medicine.

During the session, Khadar Vali, who is also a Padma Shree Awardee, talked about the amount of phytic acid present in millets, which is an antinutrient.

He argued that phytic acid is present but less than 20 times compared to legumes. Soaking it in water helps to hydrate the fibre, which then activates the PMF (proton motive force, that keeps the mitochondria - a component in the cell - young).

"Disease is not generated at all. There are no radicals entering the body. You maintain the balance at the energy level," he said.

The session was also attended by Raksha Lulla, a fat loss and lifestyle coach, who called millets a skincare powerhouse. She said, "Millets have niacin, which is vitamin B3. It is one ingredient that people have been using to make their skin glow. It has zinc, which was super famous during Covid as it helps with immunity. It has beta-carotene, which, when converted to vitamin A has anti-ageing properties."

She called the cocktail of vitamin A, niacin and zinc a "power combination for the skin." "When we have an epidemic of skin disorders like acne or hormonal issues, this is something that comes as a blessing to a lot of women and society at large," said Raksha Lulla.

The lifestyle coach further shared the ideal way to cook millets. "The best way to destroy the antinutrients is by soaking them (millets). Some people soak them overnight, but just soaking for 4-6 hours also works. It makes them bioavailable, which means that all the nutrients present will be available for absorption in an easy way. You do not need a lot to go with it: paneer, cashew, peanuts, chutney or ghee are enough to combine with millets that would help with the absorption of vitamins," said Raksha Lulla.

Chef Manisha Bhasin, Corporate Executive Chef at ITC, who was also a guest speaker during the session, spoke about how one can make millets exciting in their daily cooking.

"It's very important to take millet at its face value. Make it very easy, interesting and fun. I don't like to cook it in a traditional way. In lasagna, fortify your regular atta and put sorghum flour in it. At least have 50% millet in your meal. It's not possible to make a complete meal millet-based. It's easy to start small and find your own answers in your own pantry," said Chef Manisha.

Edited By:Daphne Clarence

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