

**Medicinal and nutritional value of *Panicum miliaceum* L. (Meneri): a review**

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**Abstract**

*Panicum miliaceum* L., a member of family Poaceae, commonly known as proso millet is one of the oldest cultivated grain crops in ancient China. This millet is cultivated throughout the tropical regions of the world including India and Sri Lanka. This annual grass exhibits desirable characteristics as an alternative crop due to its short growing season and ability to produce grain under limited water on marginal soil with low agronomic inputs. The seeds are small and can be cream, yellow, orange-red or brown in colour. Proso millet contains fat (4%), carbohydrates (70%), high amount of protein compared to other grains (10-12%) and significantly richer in essential amino acids. This is a gluten free grain and therefore it is suitable for people with coeliac disease and other gluten intolerances. It is an effective alternative for wheat and wheat products. It also contains oleic acid, linoleic acid, stearic acid and essential minerals like phosphorus, manganese, calcium and magnesium and rich in B-complex vitamins. Proso millet is rich in phytochemicals including phytic acid, which is believed to lower cholesterol, and phytate, which is associated with reducing cancer risks, along with phenolic acids and benzoic acids. It is a highly nutritious grain, like kurakkan (*Eleusine coracana*) and is suitable for supper. Data has been collected from Ayurveda texts, research articles and internet sources. Medicinally, the grain being made into a conjee is given for acidity and biliousness. It is also used in the treatment of snakebite poisoning. The cooked seed is applied as a poultice for abscesses and sores. Proso millet is also useful for health conditions like heart diseases, hypercholesterol, breast cancer, diabetes, coeliac diseases, gallstones, haematuria, inflammation and wrinkles. The study also attempted at encouraging populace to consume this highly nutritious, easily digestible and gluten-free proso millet for their day-to-day meal, not only to cure diseases, but also for maintaining a healthy life.

**Keywords:** Gluten-free, grain, Proso millet

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