

Medicinal Benefits of Soursop (Guanabana)

- **Origin:** Tropical America
- **Family:** Annonaceae
- **Botanical Name:** *Annona muricata*
- **Varieties:** about nine, differing in shape, texture in flavors
- **Season:** almost all the year round
- **Tree:** height; up to 10 m

- **Fruit:** length:12 - 24 cm; weight: 400 - 800 gm



Soursop is a fruit that has the most delectable flavor. The soursop is a large fruit of a small, fast-growing tree. The fruit is picked from the tree before it has fully ripened as it will be badly bruised if allowed to ripen and fall. The fruit is mature and is ready for eating when it feels slightly soft and is light green externally. The skin is thin and is covered with conical nibs. The white, pulpy flesh, which contains juice, is peppered with small shiny, black inedible seeds, and has a pleasant, sweet-acidic taste. As it is rather fibrous, its squeezed juice makes a better choice, and has, in fact become more popular than the fresh fruit as such. Soursop has few seedless varieties, but they are rare, and tend to have fibrous flesh.

Medicinal Benefits: Soursop is not only a delicious and healthy fruit but it is use medicinally to treat illness ranging from stomach ailments to worms.

- The seeds, which have emetic properties, can be used in the treatment of vomiting.
- The leaf decoction is effective for head lice and bedbugs.
- The crushed fresh leaves can be applied on skin eruptions to promote healing.
- The juice of the fruit can be taken orally as a remedy for urethritis, haematuria and liver ailments.
- The juice when taken when fasting, it is believed to relieve liver ailments and leprosy.
- To speed the healing of wounds, the flesh of the soursop is applied as a poultice unchanged for 3 days.
- A decoction of the young shoots or leaves is regarded as a remedy for gall bladder trouble, as well as coughs, catarrh, diarrhea, dysentery, fever and indigestion.
- Mashed leaves are used as a poultice to alleviate eczema and other skin problems and rheumatism.
- The root bark is use as an antidote for poisoning.
- Soursop flowers are believed to alleviate catarrh.
- Decoction of leaves used as compresses for inflammation and swollen feet.

Nutrient Value per 100 grams servings:

- Vitamin: C 20.6
- Calcium: 14
- Iron: 0.6
- Calories: 66
- Dietary Fiber: 3.3g
- Protein: 1g
- Cholesterol: 0mg
- Sodium: 14mg
- Sugars: 13.54g
- Total Carbohydrate: 16.84g
- Total Fat: 0.3g
- Saturated Fat: 0.05g
- Monounsaturated Fat: 0.09g
- Polyunsaturated Fat: 0.06g
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Culinary uses: eaten fresh as fruit; made into cakes, ice cream, preserved, beverages and for flavoring. The young soursop, where the seeds are still soft, is used as a vegetable. The fermented fruit is also use to make an apple cider-like drink.