

**Botanic name:** *Sesamum indicum* L. -- Sp. Pl. 2: 634. 1753 [1 May 1753]; nom. cons. (IK)

**Common name:** Sesame, Til (Bengali)

**Family:** Pedaliaceae

**Distribution:** Native to India; grown in Bangladesh, China, Korea, Russia, Turkey, Mexico, South America, and several countries of Africa

**Description:** Erect, annual, pubescent herb, leaves simple and ovate to linear; flowers purple or whitish with purple or yellow marks, tubular, drooping, pubescent; fruits capsule oblong, bluntly 4 gonous, erect dehiscent from above downwards

**Phytochemicals:** Glycerides of oleic and linoleic acids and also palmitic, stearin, palmitin and myrsin, a crystalline substance, sesamin; sesamol, which breaks down to a phenolic substance, sesamol and sesamin (seeds), flavonoid glycoside-petalin, a gummy substance and mucilage (leaves)

**Medicinal/Economic uses:** Astringent, diuretic, emollient, galactagogue, laxative, lenitive and tonic for liver and kidney. Different pharmacological preparations of seeds are used in the treatment of asthma, infant cholera, diarrhoea, dysentery, premature hair loss and greying, convalescence, chronic dry constipation, dental caries, osteoporosis, stiff joints, haemorrhoids, ulcers, dry cough, catarrh and bladder troubles. Both sesamin and sesamol are known to have a cholesterol lowering effect in humans and to prevent high blood pressure. Sesame oil contains a large amount of linoleate in triglyceride form that selectively inhibits malignant melanoma growth. Cultivated for its edible seed and oil since c 2,000 BC. Edible oil (herbal oil) is prepared from the seed and very good for health for high amount of PUFA and MUFA and low saturated fat. It is also used to prepare traditional cake (locality called pitha). Used as an ingredient in soap, cosmetics, lubricants and medicines. After making paste cooked with dry fish and taken as curry. The Chakma tribes of Tripura use plant as fry. Seeds and fresh leaves may be used as a poultice. Seeds are also be ground into a powder and used as a flour, added to breads, vegetables etc, used to make sweetmeats, or crushed and used as a butter; fermented product known as 'tempeh', ground into a powder and mixed with a sweetener to make 'halva', or made into a paste and used as the spread 'tahini'. Leaves - raw or cooked as a potherb or added to soups.

More read: Anilkumar et al. (2010) *Agriculturae Conspectus Scientificus* 75: 159-168.