

# Prickly Pear Cactus Medicine: Treatments for Diabetes, Cholesterol, and the Immune System

Ran Knishinsky

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The first complete guide to natural healing properties and uses of the prickly pear cactus

- Examines the scientific research promoting the cactus as a natural diabetes and cholesterol medication as well as its use in the treatment of obesity, gastrointestinal disorders, skin ailments, and viral infections
- Explores the healing uses of prickly pears from the perspective of doctor, chemist, ethnobotanist, cook, and layman
- Includes 24 cactus recipes--from Prickly Pear Bread to Cactus Candy

The prickly pear cactus--a plant that has the distinction of being a vegetable, fruit, and flower all in one--is destined to be the next big herbal superstar, following in the footsteps of St. John's wort and Echinacea, according to author Ran Knishinsky. One of the driving forces behind its popularity is that each part of this plant functions as both food and medicine. It has been a staple in the diets of the people of the southwestern portion of the United States, the Middle East, parts of Europe and Africa, and Central and South America for hundreds of years.

Traditionally, the prickly pear cactus has been used as a panacea for over 100 different ailments. More recently, it has been the subject of blood cholesterol research trials sponsored by the American Heart Association. In addition to the results of this research, Knishinsky includes scientific studies on the antiviral properties of the cactus to treat herpes, influenza, and HIV, as well as its use in treating obesity, gastrointestinal disorders, and skin ailments. A resource section details the natural food companies that supply prickly pear cactus and a chapter of recipes offers 24 traditional and modern dishes using the pads and fruit of the cactus.



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