

# Garden Cress Seeds: An Ancient Medicine, Nutritional and Functional Food

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**Abstract**—Garden cress (*Lepidium sativum*) also known as pepper cress, is a fast-growing, perennial edible plant, botanically related to mustard and grown in all parts of India and often used most typically as a garnish or as a leaf vegetable. Garden cress seed is categorized under oilseeds. In some regions, garden cress is known as “common cress”, “land cress”, “Haliv”, “Asalio” or “Chandrasur” in India. Seeds of garden cress are small and oval being pointed and triangular at one end. They are reddish brown in colour, approximately 3–4 mm long and 1–2 mm wide. Garden cress has been considered as an important nutritional and medicinal plant in India since the Vedic era due to its health promoting properties. The seeds are rich in protein (23.6 g), fat (23.47 g), calcium (318 mg) and iron (17.20 mg). Seeds are also richest source of essential fatty acids i.e. linoleic (8.6%) and linolenic (26.42%). They are considered to be anticarcinogenic, antidiabetic, antihyperlipidemic, antiasthmatic, anti-inflammatory, galactagogue, antioxidative and antidiarrheal. Garden cress seeds are largely used for the treatment of many diseases such as hypertension, renal disease, gastrointestinal disorders and fracture healing. It helps to purify blood and stimulate appetite. It also helps to alleviate anemia due to its high iron content. Because of its high iron and protein content, it is often given post-partum to lactating mothers.

**Keywords:** Garden cress seeds, Treatment, Medicinal, Minerals, essential fatty acids.