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PUMPKIN IN THE QURAN AND PROPHETIC *AHADITH*, ITS ANTIOXIDANT BENEFITS AND HEALTH IMPLICATIONS

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Abstract

Pumpkin, cited in the Quran and Prophetic *abadith*, is recognized as a highly nutritious fruit or vegetable and offers numerous health benefits. It is the only antioxidant fruit in the Quran that is stated in the form of story specifically, portraying the benefits of pumpkin plant in reviving a weakened body of Prophet Yunus who suffered skin problems after being swallowed by a big fish. Scientific investigations have revealed the presence of antioxidant compounds within pumpkins which have direct implications on skin health particularly skin problems and diseases. Skin diseases represent a significant public health issue; hence, it is imperative to promote action at the individual level by innovatively devising pumpkin-nutritious meals. The health-promoting effects of pumpkin extend beyond its antioxidant activity. Its bioactive components contribute to wound healing, anti-inflammatory responses and the maintenance of healthy and glowing skin. The primary objective of this qualitative investigation is to examine pumpkin as presented in the Quran and Prophetic *abadith* alongside its antioxidant benefits and health implications. The methodological approach employed in this qualitative research is content analysis. The data obtained through content analysis were subjected to thematic analysis utilizing both descriptive and analytical techniques. The results reveal that pumpkin is mentioned once in the Quran, specifically in Surah Al-Saffat 37:146 in a specific context with indefinite form, featuring a distinctive Quranic *uslub* (linguistic style) and it is referenced in the Prophetic *abadith*. The implications of this research indicate that individuals suffering from skin diseases may benefit from incorporating pumpkin-rich diets, while healthy individuals may enhance their culinary creations by adding pumpkin to their recipes.

Keywords: Antioxidant; Gourd, Pumpkin; Quran; Hadith



INTRODUCTION

Pumpkin, a prominent member of the gourd family (Cucurbitaceae), is part of a diverse and economically significant plant group that includes crops such as melon, cucumber, watermelon, squash and gourds (Rolnik & Olas 2020). Pumpkin, a member of the Cucurbitaceae family, encompasses several species such as *Cucurbita pepo*, *Cucurbita maxima* and *Cucurbita moschata*, all recognized for their rich phytochemical profiles and significant health-promoting properties, particularly in skin health. The fruit, seeds and by-products of pumpkin are abundant in bioactive compounds, including carotenoids, polyphenols, tocopherols and essential fatty acids like oleic and linoleic acids, which collectively contribute to potent antioxidant and anti-inflammatory activities (Gavril et al. 2024). These antioxidant properties are crucial in mitigating oxidative stress, a key factor in the pathogenesis of various skin diseases (Prommaban et al. 2021).

Most commentaries of the *ayah* 146 of Surah al-Saffat describe the benefits of pumpkin in replenishing Prophet Yunus's fragile body from skin problems. The global prevalence of skin diseases is a significant public health concern, affecting a substantial portion of the population worldwide hence, it is essential to analyze the health benefits of pumpkin for this issue. Recent studies indicate that skin diseases rank among the top causes of morbidity, with a notable increase in prevalence over the years. Skin diseases affect approximately 21-85% of the global population, translating to 1.26-5.1 billion individuals, particularly in low and middle-income countries (Mphande 2020). The Global Burden of Disease Study (GBD) indicated that the prevalence of skin and subcutaneous disorders experienced an increase of 46.8% from the year 1990 to 2017, thereby positioning itself as the fourth most prevalent condition among all disease categories (Giese et al. 2021).

Despite the high prevalence and significant impact of skin diseases, they often receive less attention compared to other health issues due to their lower mortality rates (Mphande 2020). According to Richard and others (2022), the proportion of participants who reported having suffered from at least one dermatological condition or disease during the previous 12 months was 43.35% (95% CI: 42.89%, 43.81%). The projection in the total population of the 27 countries included in the study resulted in 185 103 774 individuals affected by at least one dermatological condition or disease. More than 94 million Europeans complain of uncomfortable skin sensations like itch, burning or dryness.

With the rise of global skin diseases, it is crucial to focus on advocating effective individual dietary habits before developing public health strategies and interventions tailored for specific populations and communities. Among the various evidence-based healthy diets suggested, those that are rich in plant-based foods are some of the healthiest options available (McMacken & Shah 2017; Williams & Patel 2017; Stanton 2012). Previous studies have shown that a pumpkin-based diet can be an effective approach for treating skin diseases due to its rich nutritional profile and bioactive compounds (Yadav et al., 2010).

The aim of this study is to examine pumpkin as one of the plant-based foods that may address these issues, with specific references from the Quran and Prophetic *ahadith*. This is intended to contribute to the growing global concern over skin diseases, focusing particularly on individual dietary choices. Hence, individuals suffering from skin diseases and healthy individuals can manage their diets by incorporating pumpkin into their daily meals to create nutritious, healthy options.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Knowledge about food can be obtained from the Quran and *hadith* literatures. Khafagi and others (2006) explain that the Quran addresses Shariah matters, everyday issues and scientific knowledge. They note that the Quran contains 6,600 *ayahs* that pertain to daily life. Khafagi and others (2006) emphasize that the *hadith* literature encompasses numerous sayings and traditions

of the Prophet. The Prophet's *abadith* have been documented in various *hadith* collections, including *Sabih al-Bukhari*, *Sabih Muslim*, *Sunan al-Tirmizi*, *Sunan Abi Daud*, *Sunan al-Nasaie*, *Sunan Ibn Majah*, and others.

A range of antioxidants, including dates, is stated in different chapters of *hadith* book; *kitab al-At'imah*, *kitab al-Maghazi*, *kitab al-Riqaq* and *kitab al-Itisam bi-al-Kitab wa al-Sunnah* (Al-Bukhari 2001). Consequently, this *hadith* literature serves as a foundation for later Islamic writings that concentrate on fruits, vegetables, grains, and other foods. Research by several scholars (e.g. Kahrizi et al. 2012; Khafagi et al. 2006; Marwat & Khan 2008) indicates that the Quran references plants across various *surahs* such as Surah al-Mukminun, al-Rahman, al-Baqarah and al-An'aam. These studies collectively highlight the medicinal properties of the plants mentioned in the Quran, which are used to treat various health issues. As a result, much of the research focuses on the medicinal aspects of these plants within the Quran and *hadith*.

All the previous studies (e.g. Khafagi et al 2006; Ahmad et al. 2009; Kahrizi et al. 2012; Sheikh & Dixit 2015; Tariq & Ahmed 2015) explore the medicinal plants in the Quran and *abadith* and one of the plants is pumpkin or gourd. In addition to listing the Quranic *ayahs* related to plants, researchers supplement their studies with various details such as taxonomic orders, classifications, botanical names, English and Arabic names, local names, families and genera, habits and habitats, distributions, parts used, chemical constituents, global distribution, flowering periods, meanings and issues associated with the *ayahs* and *abadith*. Khafagi and others (2006) emphasize botanical topics, including seed germination, photosynthesis and biodiversity, along with the various uses of plants. However, they do not address the antioxidant compounds and their benefits especially for skin health.

METHODOLOGY

The qualitative study employed a content analysis approach, wherein data were collected through content analysis. The focus of the study involved examining the relevant Quranic *ayahs* pertaining to pumpkin. To ensure a comprehensive collection of Quranic *ayahs* and enhance the accuracy of findings, the Quranic content was examined in both electronic and hard copy formats. The *ayah* and its English translation were sourced from the website (<https://quran.com>) and the English translation was from The Clear Quran by Mustafa al-Khattab.

The specific keyword *yagtin* was keyed in into the *Al-Maktabah al-Shamilah* software to retrieve Quranic *ayahs* related to pumpkin. For the *abadith*, specific keywords that are mentioned in the interpretation of the *ayahs* such as *al-qar'* and *al-dubba'* were keyed in into the *Al-Maktabah al-Shamilah* software to retrieve related *abadith* in *kutub al-mutun*. Database such as Google Scholar was used with keywords such as pumpkin and antioxidant.

All the data from the Quran, *abadith* and scientific articles were analyzed thematically using descriptive and analytical methods. The Arabic words were italicized for clarity and consistency throughout the study.

RESEARCH FINDINGS

The Quran describes pumpkin in Surah al-Saffat 37:146 in a specific context by delivering a story of Prophet Yunus who was in a weakened state after being swallowed by a big fish. He was at fault for leaving his people in the state of anger before seeking Allah's permission. When he was being thrown away on the shore, Allah caused a gourd tree to grow over him to provide him with shade from the sunlight, allowing him to lie beneath it and protecting him from flies (Al-Sa'di 2000). The Quran only describes the pumpkin tree once, as described in (Table 1). *Yagtin* in the *ayah* means gourd or pumpkin, according to the majority of scholars (Al-Baghawi 1997).

Table 1: *Ayah* on Pumpkin (*Yaqtin*)

Word on Pumpkin	Surah & Ayah Number	Quranic Ayah	English Translation
<i>Yaqtin</i>	al-Saffāt 37:146	وَأَنْبَتْنَا عَلَيْهِ شَجَرَةً مِّنْ يَّفْطِيلٍ	and made a gourd tree grow above him.

The consumption of pumpkin is referenced in a few *ahadith* of the Prophet. In the sociocultural context of Madinah, pumpkin is consumed in their daily diet by combining several food sources into a singular culinary preparation.

Pumpkin in the Quran

Shajarah min yaqtin in the *ayah* means gourd or pumpkin, according to most scholars (Al-Baghawi 1997; Al-Nisfi 1998). Scholars point out other words during their interpretation of the word *Yaqtin* for instance, *al-qar'* and *al-dubba'* as stated in the *hadith*. Al-Hassan and Muqatil explain that the term refers to every plant that grows hugely on the ground, does not have a rod for instance, gourd, cucumber and watermelon (Al-Baghawi 1997). This type of plant is called *yaqtin* by the Arabs (Al-Tabari 2001). Ibn Kathir (1998) also quotes a narration from Hashim from al-Qasim bin Abi Ayub from Said bin Jubair that the term *yaqtin* refers to any plant that does not have the rod. The *ayah* describes the plant with indefinite form; hence, it reflects any trellised plant from the same species, does not have the rod and has broad leaves.

Scholars explain certain benefits of the gourd tree. Allah planted the gourd tree above Prophet Yunus as a canopy just as a house is built over a person (Al-Nisfi 1998; Majma' al-Buhuth al-Islamiyah al-Azhar 1993). Prophet Yunus was sick and naked when he was cast out and the shady tree and its broad leaves covered him and protected him against flies because his body could not withstand the perch of flies after he was cast out from the ocean (Al-Sabuni 1997; Al-Nisfi 1998; Al-Alimi 2009). His body was in a weakened state and prone to diseases and it is narrated that his body returned to the state of a baby like when he was born (Al-Zamakhshari 1987). He had removed his clothes when he was to be thrown into the sea to make swimming easier. The fish's intestines had harmed his skin due to the movement around him. Allah had caused the fish to be in a state like fainting, which slowed its digestive activity so that Prophet Yunus's flesh would not be damaged (Ibn Ashur 1984).

Al-Zamakhshari (1987) explains that the place was barren with no trees or anything to cover it by referring to the term '*ara*' in the previous *ayah*. Allah caused a gourd tree to grow because it is a fast-growing plant, the shade of its leaves due to its size and tenderness, the fact that flies do not approach it, the quality of its fruit's nutrition and that it can be eaten raw and cooked, including its pulp and peel (Ibn Kathir 1998; Al-Zuhaili 1991). The pumpkin has many leaves that climb on elevated things hence, it appears that the branches of the pumpkin plant climbed over Yunus's body, covering and shading him. The pumpkin was chosen for him so that he could feed on its produce, helping to restore his body gently after the incident that was meant to discipline him. It is the way of the Lord with His servants to follow hardship with ease (Ibn Ashur 1984).

The plant is shady and the huge leaves protected him from the heat of the sun. Al-Sabuni (1997) elucidates that Allah caused a gourd tree to grow over him to provide him with shade and protect him from the sun's heat. This was part of favour Allah bestowed on Prophet Yunus. Another interesting fact about the gourd is that its fruit is huge, but its plant is trellised. This demonstrates that Allah's rule is mind-boggling. If the tree is untrellised and has the rod, the plant certainly cannot withstand the weight of dozens of its huge fruit.

Muqatil bin Hayyan narrates that every morning and evening, a goat appeared and Prophet Yunus drank its milk until he recovered, felt energetic, his flesh and hair grew strong, and he felt strong again (Al-Baghawi 1997; Jalal al-Din Mahalli & Jalal al-Din Suyuti n.d; Al-Alimi 2009). Thus, vital nutrition from gourd's fruit and goat's milk replenished his weak and sick body.

Since Al-Saffat 37:146 denotes a plant with an indefinite form, it also refers to any trellised plant of the same species that has large leaves and no rod. This paper has extended a new knowledge on pumpkin and its family. Any vegetable that has fruit and comes from the same pumpkin family may have similar benefits.

Pumpkin in the Prophetic *Ahadith*

Pumpkin is stated in several *abadith* using the terms such as *al-qar'*, *qar'*, *dubba'* and *al-dubba'* as below (Table 2):

Table 2: *Ahadith* on Pumpkin

No	Word on Pumpkin	Translation of <i>Hadith</i> in English	<i>Hadith</i> Book, Book (<i>Kitab</i>) and Chapter (<i>Bab</i>) of the <i>Hadith</i>	Number and Grade of the <i>Hadith</i>
1.	<i>Al-Qar'</i>	It was narrated that Anas said: "The Prophet (PBUH) likes gourd."	Sunan Ibn Majah, Book on Food Chapter: Gourd, Pumpkin	3302 (Sahih)
2.	<i>Qar'</i> and <i>al-Qar'</i>	It was narrated that Anas said: "Umm Sulaim sent with me a basket of fresh dates for the Messenger of Allah (PBUH), but I did not find him, as he had just gone out to a freed slave of his who had invited him and made food for him. I came to him and he was eating, and he called me to eat with him. He (the freed slave) had served him Tharid with meat and gourd, and he liked the gourd, so I started to collect the (pieces of) gourd and put them near him. When he had eaten he went back to him house and I put the basket (of dates) before him, and he started to eat them and share them, until he finished the last of them."	Sunan Ibn Majah, Book on Food Chapter: Gourd, Pumpkin	3303 (Sahih)
3.	<i>Dubba'</i> and <i>al-dubba'</i>	Narrated Ishaq bin 'Abdullah bin Abu Talhah: I heard Anas bin Malik saying, "A tailor invited Allah's Messenger (PBUH) to a meal which he had prepared. " Anas bin Malik said, "I accompanied Allah's Messenger (PBUH) to that meal. He served the Prophet (PBUH) with bread and soup made with gourd and dried meat. I saw the Prophet (PBUH) taking the pieces of gourd from the dish." Anas added, "Since that day I have continued to like gourd." Narrated Anas: I was a young boy when I once was walking with Allah's Messenger PBUH. Allah's Messenger PBUH entered the house of his slave tailor and the latter brought a dish filled with food covered with pieces of gourd. Allah's Apostle started picking and eating the gourd. When I saw that, I started collecting and placing the gourd before him. Then the slave returned to his work. Anas added: I have kept on loving gourd since I saw Allah's Messenger PBUH doing what he was doing. Anas b. Malik reported that a person invited Allah's Messenger to a meal. I also went along with him. He brought soup containing pumpkin. Allah's 'messenger ate that pumpkin with relish. He (Anas) said: When I saw that I began to place it before him, and did not eat it (myself). Anas said: It was since then that pumpkin was always my favourite (food). Anas b. Malik said: A tailor invited the Messenger of Allah to a meal which he had prepared. Anas said: I went along with the Messenger of Allah barley bread and soup containing pumpkin and dried sliced meat. Anas said: I saw the Messenger of Allah going after the	Sahih al-Bukhari, Book of Sales and Trade Chapter: the Mentioning of Tailor Sahih al-Bukhari, The Book of Foods, Meals Chapter: Whoever invited a man to a meal and then went to carry on his job Sahih Muslim, The Book of Drinks Chapter: It is permissible to eat soup, and it is recommended to eat squash Sunan Abi Dawud, Boo on Foods Chapter: Regarding Eating Squas	2092 (Sahih) 5435 5436 5439 (Sahih) 2041 (Sahih) 3782 (Sahih)

This table continues on the next page...

pumpkin round the dish, so I have always liked pumpkins since that day.

Narrated Anas bin Malik: "I saw the Messenger of Allah taking from the sides around the dish - meaning the gourd. Since then, I still like it."

Jami' al-Tirmidhi, The Book on Food Chapter: What Has Been Related About Eating Gourd 1850 (Hasan Sahih)

It was narrated from Hakin bin Jabr that his father said: "I entered upon the Prophet PBUH in his house, and he had some of this gourd. I said: 'What is this?' He said: 'This is Qar'; it is Dubba'. We augment our food with it."

Sunan Ibn Majah, Book on Food Chapter: Gourd, Pumpkin 3304 (Da'if)

Gourd or pumpkin is a type of vegetable that was eaten by the Prophet and he likes it as stated in this *hadith*:

حَدَّثَنَا أَحْمَدُ بْنُ مَنِيعٍ، أَنبَأَنَا عَبِيدَةُ بْنُ حُمَيْدٍ، عَنْ حُمَيْدٍ، عَنْ أَنَسٍ، قَالَ كَانَ النَّبِيُّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ يُحِبُّ الْقَرْعَ

Meaning: It was narrated that Anas said: "The Prophet (PBUH) like gourd." (Sunan Ibn Majah, Book on Food, Chapter Gourd, *hadith* no. 3302, *Sahih*)

The Prophet ate bread with soup or gravy, which called *al-tharid*. *Tharid* is bread that has been crumbled and mixed with broth and meat (Al-Buwaiti 2018) and it is a well-known dish (Ahmad 2004). The below *ahadith* describe this:

حَدَّثَنَا مُحَمَّدُ بْنُ الْمُثَنَّى، حَدَّثَنَا ابْنُ أَبِي عَدِيٍّ، عَنْ حُمَيْدٍ، عَنْ أَنَسٍ، قَالَ: بَعَثْتُ مَعِيَ أُمَّ سُلَيْمٍ بِمِثْلٍ فِيهِ رُطْبٌ إِلَى رَسُولِ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ، فَلَمْ أَجِدْهُ وَخَرَجَ قَرِيبًا إِلَى مَوْلَى لَهُ دَعَاهُ فَصَنَعَ لَهُ طَعَامًا فَأَتَيْتُهُ وَهُوَ يَأْكُلُ. قَالَ: فَدَعَانِي لِأَكُلَ مَعَهُ. قَالَ: وَصَنَعَ ثَرِيدَةً بِلَحْمٍ وَقَرْعٍ. قَالَ: فَإِذَا هُوَ يُعْجِبُهُ الْقَرْعُ. قَالَ: فَجَعَلْتُ أَجْمَعُهُ فَأَذْنِيهِ مِنْهُ فَلَمَّا طَعِمْنَا مِنْهُ رَجَعَ إِلَى مَنْزِلِهِ وَوَضَعْتُ الْمِثْلَ بَيْنَ يَدَيْهِ فَجَعَلَ يَأْكُلُ وَيَقْسِمُ حَتَّى فَرَغَ مِنْ آخِرِهِ.

Meaning: It was narrated that Anas said: "Umm Sulaim sent with me a basket of fresh dates for the Messenger of Allah (PBUH), but I did not find him, as he had just gone out to a freed slave of his who had invited him and made food for him. I came to him and he was eating, and he called me to eat with him. He (the freed slave) had served him *tharid* with meat and gourd, and he liked the gourd, so I started to collect the (pieces of) gourd and put them near him. When he had eaten he went back to his house and I put the basket (of dates) before him, and he started to eat them and share them, until he finished the last of them." (Sunan Ibn Majah, Book on Food, Chapter Gourd, *hadith* no. 3303, *Sahih*)

حَدَّثَنَا عَبْدُ اللَّهِ بْنُ يُوسُفَ، أَخْبَرَنَا مَالِكٌ، عَنْ إِسْحَاقَ بْنِ عَبْدِ اللَّهِ بْنِ أَبِي طَلْحَةَ، أَنَّهُ سَمِعَ أَنَسَ بْنَ مَالِكٍ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ يَقُولُ: إِنَّ خِيَّاطًا دَعَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ لِبَطْنٍ صَنَعَهُ، قَالَ أَنَسُ بْنُ مَالِكٍ: فَذَهَبْتُ مَعَ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ إِلَى ذَلِكَ الطَّعَامِ، فَقَرَّبَ إِلَى رَسُولِ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ خُبْزًا وَمَرْقًا فِيهِ دُبَّاءٌ وَقَدِيدٌ، فَرَأَيْتُ النَّبِيَّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ يَتَتَبَّعُ الدُّبَّاءَ مِنْ حَوَالِي الْقُصْعَةِ. قَالَ: فَلَمْ أَزَلْ أُحِبُّ الدُّبَّاءَ مِنْ يَوْمَئِذٍ.

Meaning: Narrated Ishaq bin Abdullah bin Abu Talha: I heard Anas bin Malik saying, "A tailor invited Allah's Messenger (PBUH) to a meal which he had prepared. " Anas bin Malik said, "I accompanied Allah's Messenger (PBUH) to that meal. He served the Prophet (PBUH) with bread and soup made with gourd and dried meat. I saw the Prophet (PBUH) taking the pieces of gourd from the dish." Anas added, "Since that day I have continued to like gourd." (Sahih al-Bukhari, Book of Sales and Trade, Chapter the Mentioning of Tailor, *hadith* no. 2092)

The townspeople would consume some vegetables and greens including endive, cucumbers and pumpkin. The Arabs eat meat in some ways; grilled, cooked and dried (*qadid*). They do not know the stove and they used what is called *tannur*, an Aramaic word. Its original Arabic name is *tabunah* which perhaps refers to the gap where fire is placed to protect it from the winds (Khursyid et.al. 1998).

Qadid in the *hadith* refers to salted dried meat. The meat is cut lengthwise, salted, dried in the sun, (Al-'Azami 2016; Al-Nabhani 2004) and preserved because the Arabs used to store meat this way. The syllable *qad* in *qadid* refers to cutting it lengthwise until it resembles a rope then, hang it on ropes to dry. Once it is dry, they gather it in a bag and take it out when needed, to cook it (Al-Ibad n.d).

The purpose of cooking *qadid* with gourd is to increase the amount of food and enhance its flavor. This method of cooking can balance the dish by reducing the heat in *qadid* and adjusting its dryness with the coolness and moisture of the gourd (Iyad 1998). Ibn Qayyim (1994) states the nature of pumpkin; cold, moist, light, watery, phlegmatic nourishment and descends quickly. Hence, it is beneficial for those who are hot but not suitable for those who are cold or those who are predominantly phlegmatic.

In a narration from Al-Isma'ili, the bread was made from barley. Al-Dawudi stated that this serves as evidence that the tailor prepared the bread and broth as *tharid*, as indicated in the *hadith*: from the dish. Al-Qurtubi said that the Prophet was taking the pieces of gourd from the dish because the food was mixed, so he would eat what he liked which was the gourd and leave what he did not like which was the dried meat (Al-Aini n.d).

Pumpkin has special characteristics that distinguish it from others and for this reason, the Prophet liked it (Al-Aini n.d). One of its characteristics is that it produces a mixture corresponding to what accompanies it; for example, if eaten with mustard, it produces a sharp mixture and with salt, a salty mixture. If the pumpkin is cooked and its juice is mixed with some honey and a bit of natron, it brings forth phlegm and bitterness together (Ibn Qayyim 1994). Pumpkin is non-irritating, digestible, soothing, moistening, a laxative and diuretic (Al-Nabulsi 2005). Although it is laxative for the stomach, if it encounters bad mixtures, it is harmful but it can be countered with vinegar and bitter substances. It is one of the gentlest foods and reacts quickly (Ibn Qayyim 1994).

Antioxidant Benefits and Health Implications of Pumpkin

Pumpkin is a type of squash that is in the same plant family as cucumber and melon. Though it is technically a fruit since it contains seeds but in terms of nutrition, it is usually considered as a vegetable (Jennings 2016; Shajan et al. 2024). All parts of the pumpkin are useful. Its shady tree protects Prophet Yunus from the sunlight, the huge leaves protect him from flies and its fruit is nutritious (Al-Sa'di 2000). The Quran describes pumpkin tree in a specific context because it has specific benefits.

Increasing the consumption of plant foods such as pumpkin can enhance energy levels, support a healthy complexion and hair, and contribute to achieving an ideal body mass index (BMI), largely due to their rich content of bioactive compounds, antioxidants, and essential nutrients that promote metabolic health and reduce inflammation (Megan 2019; Samtiya et al. 2021). The consumption of pumpkin is advantageous for the maintenance of hair and dental health; it facilitates the proliferation of hair, enhances its aesthetic appeal and softness, while simultaneously contributing to the polishing of teeth and the preservation of their well-being (Al-Uzairi n.d). Pumpkin seeds are exceptionally rich in nutrients such as proteins, healthy fats, vitamins, minerals, and bioactive compounds—including tryptophan, magnesium, zinc, polyunsaturated fatty acids, and antioxidants which collectively contribute to improved energy levels, mood regulation, and immune function (Brown 2018; Batool et al. 2022).

These are some of the diseases that can be treated with pumpkin: weakness, dyspepsia, intestinal inflammations, urinary tract infections, hemorrhoids, constipation, urinary retention,

heart ailments, insomnia, diabetes and rectal disorders. It expels fluids from swellings and effusions, purifies the chest and respiratory passages (Al-Nabulsi 2005). The intake of pumpkin can clear the darkness of vision and it can be used in preserving the deceased body, preventing decay from accelerating (Al-Uzairi n.d).

Pumpkin is recognized as a rich source of carotenoids, which are naturally occurring pigments categorized into two main groups: carotenes (such as β -carotene and α -carotene) and xanthophylls (also known as oxocarotenoids, including lutein and zeaxanthin) (Nahak & others 2014; Grassino et al. 2023). Carotenoids, including beta-carotene are potent antioxidants that protect cells from free radical damage, potentially reducing fatigue and enhancing energy levels (Chuwa & Dhiman 2023). Carotenoids in pumpkin exhibit significant antioxidant activity, which helps neutralize free radicals and reduce oxidative stress (Pinna et al. 2024; Matić et al. 2024). Carotenoids, such as β -carotene and lycopene absorb UV radiation, reducing the risk of sunburn and DNA damage (Baswan et al. 2021; Balić & Mokos 2019). They enhance the skin's innate resistance to UVB-induced erythema, providing a protective barrier against environmental stressors (Baswan et al. 2021). Carotenoids scavenge reactive oxygen species, thereby reducing oxidative stress and inflammation in the skin. They regulate gene expression related to UV light exposure, further supporting skin health (Balić & Mokos 2019; Zhang et al. 2023). Colorless carotenoids like phytoene and phytofluene have unique properties that enhance their ability to absorb UV radiation, contributing to overall skin aesthetics (Biskanaki et al. 2023). A diet rich in carotenoids has been linked to improved skin elasticity, hydration and texture, as well as a reduction in wrinkles and age spots (Biskanaki et al. 2023).

Pumpkin contains flavonoids that exhibit antioxidant properties, which can help mitigate oxidative stress and improve metabolic efficiency (Pratama et al. 2024). The energy content of pumpkin products, such as seeds and flowers, can provide a quick source of energy, beneficial for active individuals (Biezanowska-Kopeć et al. 2022; Akwukwaegbu et al. 2020). Vitamins A, C and E found in pumpkin contribute to immune function and energy production, further supporting vitality (Hussain et al. 2022a). Pumpkin pulp and seeds can boost the immune system because they are high in both vitamin C and beta-carotene. Beta-carotene that is converted into vitamin A triggers the creation of white blood cells that fight infection (Hussain et al. 2022b). Recent research highlights that the bioactive compounds in pumpkin, including carotenoids and vitamin C, contribute to immunomodulatory effects and can be considered valuable for boosting immunity, especially in the context of current health challenges such as viral infections and the post-COVID-19 period (Aldakhoul et al. 2024).

Recent research has shown that vitamin A is particularly important for strengthening the intestinal lining, making it more resistant to infections (Jennings 2016; Yan et al. 2023). Beta carotene, vitamin C, vitamin E, iron and folate strengthen the immune system and help immune cells work better to ward off germs and speed healing the wound (Gombart et al. 2020). Pumpkin contains active components like curcumin and amino acids such as leucine (Al-Nabulsi 2005).

Regular consumption of pumpkin has been shown to help prevent skin diseases and enhance immune function, owing to its rich content of bioactive compounds such as carotenoids, vitamins, and antioxidants, which exhibit anti-inflammatory and immunomodulatory properties (Dar & Sofi 2017; Balgoon et al. 2021). The antioxidants such as beta-carotene and vitamin C found in pumpkin are crucial for skin health. The antioxidant power of beta carotene in pumpkin works to combat the effects of aging on the skin and helps ease inflammation (Pathak 2018). Beta-carotene may protect the skin from the sun's damaging UV rays (Jennings 2016). Squalene, an antioxidant compound that is found in pumpkin seeds and it is similar to beta-carotene, plays a role in protecting the skin during UV and other types of radiation exposure (Megan 2019; Morgan et al. 2024). Pumpkin seeds can clean, regenerate the skin and aid in the formation of new skin cells and collagen because they contain an enormous amount of skin-friendly vitamins (A and E), minerals (zinc and selenium) and essential fatty acids. Vitamin E acts as a potent antioxidant and improves skin tone. Vitamin A motivates the production of new skin cells and helps to repair the existing skin problems (Vineetha 2014; Emad et al. 2024).

Humans get water from almost all drinks and some foods in the diet. Food provides about 20% of water on average and this could vary widely depending on the types of food chosen. Certain foods contribute to a person's dietary water intake and can help to ensure a person is adequately hydrated (Benelam & Wyness 2010; Iversen & Fogelholm 2023). Squash is among the foods that have high water content (90-99%) (Popkin et al. 2010; Azab et al. 2022). It can be included in the diet to keep the body hydrated and help to beat the heat. Gourd juice quenches thirst, alleviating hot headaches, hot eye ailments and fevers. The juice can be used to wash the head because it can soothe the heat of a raging fever. It can be pounded and used as a poultice on the forehead (Ibn Qayyim 1994).

Prolonged immersion in water, especially in hot conditions, can lead to excessive sweating and fluid loss, which is exacerbated by hyperbaric pressure in diving scenarios (Wekre et al. 2022). High sweat rates can result in significant sodium and potassium losses, contributing to dehydration and impairing physical performance (Holmes 2012; Bae & Hyon 2020). Severe dehydration can lead to life-threatening conditions, including heat illness and chronic hyponatremia, particularly in environments with high temperatures (Yajima et al. 2023).

The intake of pumpkin and milk together can contribute to replenishing a weak, dehydrated body as both ingredients are rich in essential nutrients and have health benefits. Milk provides high-quality protein, calcium and essential fatty acids, contributing to muscle repair and bone health. Pumpkin, on the other hand, is abundant in dietary fiber, vitamins, minerals, and bioactive compounds such as carotenoids and antioxidants, which aid digestion, enhance immune function and help address nutritional deficiencies, particularly in periods of increased physiological stress or recovery (Rajaram et al. 2015; Istieuv et al. 2024). Pumpkin is a significant source of beta-carotene, which is vital for immune function and vision. While the combination is beneficial, individuals with lactose intolerance may experience adverse effects from milk, suggesting that alternative sources of protein and calcium should be considered for those individuals.

Table 3 below summarizes antioxidant compounds with their benefits, as well as their molecular formula:

Table 3: Antioxidant Compound with Its Benefits

Compound	Molecular Formula	Benefits
Beta-carotene	C ₄₀ H ₅₆	Supports vision, boosts the immune system, reducing fatigue and enhancing energy levels
Lycopene	C ₄₀ H ₅₆	Absorbs UV radiation, reducing the risk of sunburn and DNA damage
Phytoene	C ₄₀ H ₆₄	Supports skin health, may protect against UV radiation
Phytofluene	C ₄₀ H ₆₂	Supports skin health, may protect against UV radiation
Flavonoids	C ₁₅ H ₁₀ O ₂	Improves metabolic efficiency
Curcumin	C ₂₁ H ₂₀ O ₆	Supports brain health
Leucine	C ₆ H ₁₃ NO ₂	Supports muscle growth and repair, regulates blood sugar levels
Squalene	C ₃₀ H ₅₀	Supports skin health, protecting the skin during UV and other types of radiation exposure

Incorporating pumpkin in various forms, for instance, powders and soups can enhance dietary intake of beneficial compounds, supporting overall skin health (Hussain et al. 2022a). However, an excessive intake of pumpkin can lead to a condition known as carotenemia due to

the excessive carotenoids. This is characterized by a yellowing of the skin, particularly on the palms of the hands and the soles of the feet. While pumpkin shows promise, the evidence linking specific dietary components to skin health remains limited, necessitating further clinical studies to establish definitive connections and guidelines for dietary interventions in dermatology (Katta & Desai 2014; Min et al. 2024).

The Quran delineates the subject of pumpkin within a specific context and pertains to the plight of an exceedingly weakened individual who has been swallowed by a fish and subsequently cast onto the shore. An individual in this condition unequivocally encounters a multitude of complications, including dermatological and immunological disorders, infections, as well as other health-related concerns. Consequently, addressing these health issues through dietary means aligns with the fundamental principle: The most effective remedy is that which is derived from food and the most beneficial food is that which serves as a remedy (Al-Nabulsi 2005).

For optimal health, it is imperative for a healthy individual to integrate the consumption of pumpkin with other food items to achieve a complete and nutritionally balanced diet. The prophetic *ahadith* elucidate that the populace of Madinah during that era incorporated gourd or pumpkin within a culinary preparation that was nutritionally enriching. This dish serves as a source of carbohydrates derived from bread, provides protein from meat, while the gourd contributes essential vitamins, minerals and dietary fibers.

CONCLUSION

Pumpkin is classified as a fruit or vegetable that possesses a plethora of nutrients and advantages. The Quran employs linguistic style (*uslub*) such as the indefinite form to indicate plants belonging to the same species or family as pumpkin, thereby illustrating the linguistic miracle (*al-i'jaz al-lughawi*) of the Quran. Pumpkin, gourd or any other fruit or vegetable from the same species may have similar health benefits. The scientific miracle of the Quranic content (*al-i'jaz al-'ilmi*) pertaining to pumpkin underscores the presence of beneficial antioxidant compounds serving specific functions and benefits. This research suggests that individuals suffering from dermatological conditions might benefit from incorporating diets rich in pumpkins, while a healthy individual could enhance a nutritious dish through the inclusion of pumpkin in the recipe.

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AUTHORS CONTRIBUTIONS

This article has been developed collaboratively from the initial draft to publication. The second author made significant contributions to the *hadith* content, while the third author contributed to the Quranic content of the paper. All authors have reviewed the manuscript and agreed to its final version.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

Authors declare a short statement included in journal articles to disclose any potential conflicts (financial, personal, or professional) that might influence the work.

ETHICS STATEMENT

This study did not involve human or animal subjects. All data used were obtained from publicly accessible sources and did not include any personally identifiable information. Ethical approval was therefore not required.

ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE (AI) GENERATED TEXT DECLARATION

Artificial Intelligence (AI) tools were used to assist in language refinement and proofreading during the writing of this manuscript. Tools such as grammar checkers and paraphrasing assistants were used solely to enhance clarity and ensure academic quality. No AI tool was used to generate the original content, conduct analysis, or replace any part of the researchers' intellectual contributions.

DATA AVAILABILITY STATEMENT

The original contributions presented in the study are included in the article/supplementary material, further inquiries can be directed to the corresponding author/s.

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