



## 12 Great Ways to Use... Healthy Herbs and Spices

*Using herbs and spices can add zip to your meals – and may just add some pep to your step as well! Cooks around the world have used the seeds, roots, barks and leaves of plants to add deliciously subtle or bold flavor to their cuisine for centuries. Today, research confirms what many of these cultures knew intuitively: herbs and spices are not only full of flavor, they're healthy as well. They add antioxidants to our diet and are a versatile and tasty alternative to salt. A little can go a long way, too: try using ¼ teaspoon at first, and if you want to boost the flavor even more, add by 1/8 teaspoon increments.*

### Spices

- 1. Cayenne**, a ground hot red chili pepper, has a high concentration of capsaicin, a substance that not only gives the pepper its fiery hot sensation but also temporarily acts as a pain reliever. Add a small amount to sauces, stews and seafood dishes for a boost of flavor and heat.
- 2. Cinnamon** is known for its anti-inflammatory properties. Sprinkle over oatmeal, stewed fruits or applesauce. "Ceylon cinnamon," is often referred to as "true cinnamon". It's more expensive than "Chinese" or "Saigon" cinnamon (sometimes collectively referred to as Cassia Cinnamon), which is most widely available in the U.S. Ceylon cinnamon, has a more subtle and complex taste, but all varieties have been shown to contain the active components that provide its healthy properties.
- 3. Cumin** is known to promote healthy digestion. In addition to using it in curries and chilis, stir cumin into Greek yogurt for an instant dip or sauce for wraps. A little sprinkled on top of hummus is delicious, too.
- 4. Turmeric** is another powerful anti-inflammatory spice. Its warm, peppery and slightly bitter taste heightens the flavor of rice and grain dishes, and can be blended with cumin in stews and curries.
- 5. Ginger** helps with nausea, sea sickness, and upset stomach. Sprinkle ginger powder lightly over carrots, squash or sweet potatoes before roasting. Try this idea for a refreshing and stomach-settling tea: In a mug or cup, pour boiling water over several thin slices of peeled ginger root, add the juice from half a lemon and let steep for five minutes. Enjoy.
- 6. Nutmeg** has antibacterial properties that help protect teeth and gums. A dusting of its warm flavor and fragrant aroma works well with sautéed spinach and other greens, in quiches, and pasta and cheese dishes. Buy a few whole nutmeg seeds and store them in a tightly sealed jar. To use, grate a seed against the small holes of a box grater.

### Herbs

- 7. Basil**, well-known as the classic herb for making pesto, has anti-inflammatory properties and nutrients essential for cardiovascular health. For a bright, fresh taste, combine chopped basil and mint to gently sautéed zucchini or summer squash.
- 8. Dill** is a unique plant in that both its leaves and seeds are used as a seasoning. It's considered an antibacterial and also protects against free radicals that can cause cellular damage. For a refreshing dip, combine dill with plain yogurt and chopped cucumber. Fish, especially salmon and trout, pair nicely with chopped dill.
- 9. Oregano** not only flavors many pasta dishes, but is a good source of fiber and contains a bountiful amount of healthful nutrients, too. Add dried oregano to egg dishes such as frittatas and omelets, sprinkle over salads, or add to salad dressings.
- 10. Parsley** is a good source of folic acid, an important B vitamin important to heart health. Fresh parsley is best as its flavors gets lost in the dried version. Add chopped parsley to salads; at the end of cooking, add it to vegetable sautés, pasta and fish dishes, or combine with mint and add to grain dishes.
- 11.** Poets and romantics long associated the herb **rosemary** with memory for good reason. It contains carnolic acid that helps fight off free radical damage in the brain. When roasting potatoes lightly dressed with olive oil, place sprigs of rosemary around the pan; they'll add fragrance and taste to your spuds.
- 12. Thyme** is nutrient and antioxidant dense. Use it fresh or dried in a range of dishes from soups to roasts; it pairs well with beans, mushrooms and vegetable dishes.

