

Editor's Note

Dear Readers,

Herbs and Spices are the prime medicinal agents in Ayurveda. Spices are extensively used in cooking. All spices and food have profound effect on the overall balance of respective doshas. This is proven by the fact that through adjusting the balance of diet only, many health issues can be alleviated. Spices not only add color, flavor and taste to food substances but add to nutritional benefits, thereby improving one's health when used rightly. Spices provide innumerable benefits and can serve as potent simple kitchen remedies for common ailments. The properties of all the spices and herbs are due to their taste, potency, post digestive effect and special action.

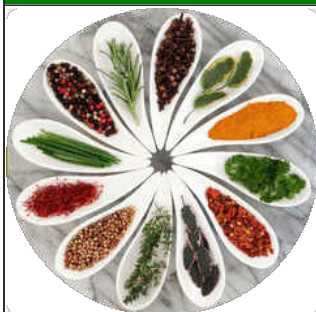
Many Ayurvedic herbs are common spices like ginger, turmeric, etc. The uses of these spices are explained in Ayurvedic texts. Recent research studies suggest that spices can be effective health remedies such as cinnamon is effective against diabetes and improves lipid metabolism; turmeric fights against cancer, ginger is effective in arthritis, etc. They act on different organ systems of the body thereby bringing desired health results. In this newsletter we will discuss simple home remedies using spices.

We welcome your suggestions and submissions.

Enjoy reading and get benefited with Ayurveda.

Vaidya Lakshmi Anoop

Healthy Home Remedies with Spices



Apart from use in kitchen, spices possess medicinal uses which have important role to alleviate common ailments. Spices have healing properties; some are antimicrobial, anti inflammatory, anti oxidant, antipyretic, hypolipidemic, hypoglycemic, carminative and digestive. Spices are commonly used in forms like powder, hot infusion and cold infusion. Below are some healthy home remedies with spices from your kitchen rack.

Cinnamon

Halitosis & Toothache – Mouth gargle with hot infusion of cinnamon is recommended twice daily.

Diabetes – Cinnamon tea is recommended twice daily.

Cold and Cough – 1 cup hot infusion of cinnamon mixed with 1 tsp ginger juice is advised 3 – 4 times a day.

Nausea & Vomiting – A piece of cinnamon is kept in mouth and chewed.

Saffron

Painful menses and PMS – 5 – 8 strands of saffron can be taken with water on an empty stomach or before food.

Nutmeg

Pimples and Cracks in feet – Apply a paste of nutmeg and milk externally.

Insomnia – ¼ tsp nutmeg powder is taken with milk at night.

Clove

Urinary tract infection – Cold infusion of clove 5 – 10 ml is given every 15 minutes.

Vomiting & Anorexia in pregnancy – Hot infusion of clove is administered every few hours.

Cardamom

Low energy – Cardamom milk or cardamom tea is taken.

Halitosis – Chew few cardamom seeds after every meal.

Fresh ginger

Anorexia, Indigestion – 1 tsp ginger juice mixed with salt is taken before meals.

Productive cough – 1 tsp ginger juice is taken with a pinch of turmeric 3 – 4 times a day.

Nausea, Vomiting, Gastritis – 1 tsp ginger juice mixed with a pinch of rock salt and asafetida is taken.

Dry ginger powder

Acute stomachache – ½ tsp of dry ginger is administered with warm water.

Fenugreek

Post partum period – 1 tsp fenugreek mixed with jiggery is taken to cleanse uterus and to enhance lactation.

Spasmodic pain due to indigestion – 1 tsp fenugreek powder mixed with curd is administered.

Leucorrhoea – Fenugreek seeds are boiled with water, filtered and used for vaginal wash.

Localized oedema and pain – Fenugreek powder mixed with mustard oil is applied.

Coriander seeds

Burning micturition – Cold infusion of coriander seeds and cumin seeds should be taken in small quantities frequently.

Swelling in feet – Hot infusion of coriander seeds can be taken 2 – 3 times daily.

Ajwain

Bronchitis – Ajwain added to steam inhalation makes breathing easier.

Recurrent cold – 1 tsp fried seeds of Ajwain is taken with warm water once or twice daily.

Cumin

Indigestion, abdominal distension – Water boiled with cumin seeds are taken 3 – 4 times daily.

Anorexia– 1 glass of buttermilk added with 1 tsp crushed cumin seeds or cumin powder and rock salt is taken.

Turmeric

External wound& insect bite – Turmeric paste is applied externally.

Cold and Cough – ¼ tsp of turmeric is taken with 1 glass of warm milk.

For beauty – 1 part turmeric is mixed with 5 parts green gram flour and used for bathing.

Black pepper

Cough & Asthma - Black pepper powder is taken with honey.

Sore throat – Gargling should be done with warm water boiled with black pepper and rock salt.

Fennel

Diarrhea – Powder of fennel seeds 1 tsp and dry ginger ½ tsp should be taken 3 – 4 times a day.

Abdominal distension in infants – Cold infusion of fennel seeds 5 – 6 drops should be given before nursing infants to prevent abdominal distension and loose motion.

Burning sensation and Dryness in throat, excessive thirst – Decoction of fennel and coriander seeds should be taken twice or thrice daily.

Though spices provide infinite health benefits they should be used sparingly. Add spice to your life by making optimal use of the nature's gift to humanity.

This Article is written by Dr. Mita Kotecha (Ph. D.) Professor Dravyaguna Department NIA, Jaipur.

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