

Spices for your Well-Being

Rather than reaching for drugs in your medicine cabinet, why don't you consider trying some of these marvelous spices for your ailments? Many offer health benefits while providing exotic flavors, smells and taste to your cooking. Here are a few to consider.

Turmeric-known for its anti-inflammatory properties. Many studies suggest its benefits with arthritis. This little spice has actually gone head to head with NSAID's with impressive results particularly if taken in a specified dose. Maybe it's time to brush up on your culinary skills, particularly Indian cuisine.

Rosemary is one of the tradition herbs for poultry but it also has been effective with headaches. I simply love to have a pot growing in my kitchen year-round so I can have fresh sprigs anytime I want to season my foods.

Nutmeg has always seemed like a warming spice, used with wintery foods like yams, winter squash, soups and hot cereals. It's also great in your pumpkin or yam smoothies. It has a positive effect on mood with the possibility of enhancing serotonin, the feel-good hormone in our brain that tells us we are happy. And remember citrus scents can also signal the brain and help with "the blues".

Anise and Fennel are often used to relieve intestinal gas. It's easy to carry fennel in my purse and chewed on this tiny herb when I know I will be eating foods that upset my stomach. Better yet, add fresh fennel to your salads, soups etc. The taste is awesome.

Cinnamon has been shown to reduce blood sugar. Great with Badmoon pancakes and many other delicious recipes from the *Genesis Transformation* Recipe website. It's a regular spice in my smoothies and pancakes.

Ginger creates a feeling of warmth. Slicing or grating fresh ginger in hot water with a little lemon goes a long way for decreasing nausea. Many pregnant women use this when experiencing morning sickness.

Sage and Thyme are powerful anti-virals so incorporate these two wonder-spices into your winter cooking. They are potent natural forces against the flu, which is rearing its ugly head now. **Clove** is also a strong anti-bacterial and anti-fungal fighter.

Basil, my all-time favorite, is a muscle relaxant. It's great in any meat, soup or salad. It also is known to fight infection. I use this daily from salads to meats.

Peppermint is a stimulant and also helps with digestion. I love to drink the dried leaves from my garden on a wintery night or add a fresh sprig to mineral water with lemon. Try some in your winter bath along with lavender. Sheer heaven!

Learn more about the spices you have in your kitchen. They might do more than bring life to your food. They might actually make you feel better and enhance your health.

