



Spices for Health: Ginger

October 23, 2013

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Ginger is one of those spices that is good in anything! Sweet or savory. Ginger has a sweet, pungent spicy kick to it. You can find ginger fresh in the produce section of most stores, or as the dried ground spice. But, if you've never cooked with fresh ginger, you are missing out!

This spicy root is native to Southeast Asia and is a common ingredient in Thai, Vietnamese, Japanese and Indian food (and more since its popularity has spread worldwide!).

Ginger has been used medicinally for thousands of years. Traditionally, it's been used to treat upset stomachs, nausea, colds, arthritis and migraines. The most common and well established use of ginger throughout history is its ability to help with nausea and vomiting.

Luckily, ginger is also one of the most studied spices. Research has focused mostly on ginger's effects on heart disease, diabetes, pain, cancer and of course stomach issues.

Studies have found:

- Ginger has **antiplatelet, hypotensive, and hypolipidemic** effects, meaning that it could help decrease your risk for heart disease.
- Ginger may help **increase insulin sensitivity** in those with Type II Diabetes.
- Ginger can **reduce pain** in those with osteoarthritis; a few studies even found that it was just as effective as taking ibuprofen for arthritis pain.
- Ginger has been shown to **reduce certain types of cancer** by inhibiting the growth and production of cancer cells and also by inducing the death of cancer cells. Other studies show that due to ginger's anti-inflammatory actions it reduced cancer risk.
- Ginger has been found to be **effective in treating gas, bloating, nausea and vomiting**. In fact, ginger has been reported to be as effective as Dramamine in treating nausea and vomiting in pregnancy with fewer side effects.

Want some ideas on how to add more ginger to your life?

- Grate fresh ginger over fruit or stir into yogurt
- Add grated ginger to smoothies, salad dressings, sauces and marinades
- Mix fresh grated ginger with a little honey for a sweet and spicy glaze for steamed or sautéed carrots or broiled salmon
- Make a tea out of sliced ginger, fresh lemon and warm water