

Nutrition News for Seniors



Provided by the Nutrition Division of the Westchester County Department of Senior Programs and Services

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New Reasons to Season

Spices and herbs make food taste great. They also help add flavor without adding salt, fat, or sugar - making it easier to follow today's health recommendations. Now there are even more reasons to season.

Emerging evidence suggest that spices and herbs not only please our palate, they may actually help maintain good health. Since spices and herbs are derived from plants, they share many of the same benefits of fruits and vegetables.

For instance, spices and herbs are surprisingly rich in antioxidants - with levels comparable to fruits and vegetables, including many of today's popular "super foods."

You may be surprised to learn that $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon of ground cinnamon contains as many antioxidants as $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of raspberries or strawberries or $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of pomegranate juice. Since spices and herbs are dried, they become a more concentrated source of natural antioxidants.*

A Snap Shot of the "SUPER 7"

Emerging research is beginning to evaluate whether there are health benefits linked to these "Super 7 Spices." More data, including controlled human studies, are needed before conclusions can be made.



SPICE/HERB	RESEARCH FOCUS
CINNAMON	Blood sugar regulation
GINGER	Gastrointestinal symptoms, muscle pain
OREGANO	Inhibit bacterial growth, inflammation
RED PEPPERS	Satiety and metabolic rate
ROSEMARY	Inhibit inflammation, cognitive function
THYME	Reduce cell damage caused by free radicals, inflammation
YELLOW CURRY (TURMERIC)	Inflammation, heart health, cognitive function

*The antioxidant levels of spices and herbs are included in the USDA Database for the Oxygen Radical Absorbance Capacity (ORAC) of Selected Foods.

Boost your antioxidant intake by following the tips on the Super 7 Spices and Herbs listed below:

QUICK TIP 1: Keep a shaker of **Ground Cinnamon** handy to sprinkle over everything from hot cocoa to oatmeal and fruit salad.



QUICK TIP 2: Add a hint of ginger to hot or iced tea. Sweeten 1 cup of tea with $\frac{3}{4}$ teaspoon sugar mixed with $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon **Ground Ginger**.

QUICK TIP 3: For a twist on the typical grilled cheese, prepare sandwich with sliced mozzarella cheese, sliced tomato and $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon **Oregano Leaves**.

QUICK TIP 4: Add a kick to store-bought or homemade hummus or guacamole by stirring in $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon **Ground Red Pepper** or **Crushed Red Pepper**. Or, try sprinkling in a little **Paprika**.



QUICK TIP 5: Dress up ready-to-bake rolls. Just before baking frozen dinner rolls or ready-to-bake rolls, brush tops with olive oil and sprinkle with crushed **Rosemary Leaves** and Sea Salt before baking.

QUICK TIP 6: Wake up taste buds with Herbed Scrambled Eggs. Beat $\frac{1}{8}$ teaspoon **Thyme Leaves** into 2 eggs before scrambling.



QUICK TIP 7: Create a spiced Curried Pilaf by adding $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon **Yellow Curry** to 2 cups hot cooked rice. Add flavor and texture with a handful of shredded carrots, peas, raisins or toasted sliced almonds.

Source: McCormick.www.spicesforhealth.com January 2010

WORD JUMBLE -

Unscramble these letters to find six popular spices.

1. ERRAYOMS
2. RAPPAKI
3. RINGGE
4. GEANOR
5. MYTEH
6. NIANNOMC

Answers: 1. Rosemary 2. Paprika 3. Ginger 4. Oregano 5. Thyme 6. Cinnamon

Food for Thought: April is a great time to start your own herb garden.