

# Herbs and Spices:

Why are They so Awesome?



If you're a fan of making your meals healthier and more delicious, we've got some new best friends for you!

**Herbs (plant leaves) and spices (made from seeds, roots, bark, or fruit of a plant) are healthy additions in two big ways:**

1. They make your food more flavorful, so you don't have to add less-than-healthy ingredients like sugar, salt, and fats.
2. They naturally contain healthy compounds that have many different health benefits.



**Remember, it's always a good idea to check with your doctor about your specific needs before making any significant changes to your diet.**

## Let's get to know some healthy herbs and spices that can add a zing to meal planning:



### Cardamom

If you're a fan of pumpkin spice, you've probably tasted the warmth of cardamom. It's available ground or as whole pods. Some studies have shown it can help your stomach and may help reduce inflammation.



### Turmeric

Another star in curries, this brightly-colored spice has an earthy, sweet flavor. It also contains an antioxidant that reduces inflammation. Research also shows that it may help reduce pain and help prevent or slow down memory loss.



### Cinnamon

Like sweetness, but want to cut back on sugar? Try a pinch of cinnamon! In addition to adding a tasty warmth to your dish, it may help reduce inflammation.



### Cumin

If you like curry, you have likely already enjoyed the earthy, nutty flavor of cumin. It's naturally rich in iron and may help with weight loss.



### Garlic

We all know the robust flavor of garlic, but did you also know that research has shown it may also lower your chances of getting heart disease and reduce high cholesterol and blood pressure?



### Ginger

This funky little root adds a peppery, spicy kick and can help with an upset stomach. It also has healthy anti-inflammatory and antioxidant properties.



### Rosemary

Rosemary brings a fresh, herby taste and smells great. It's also rich in antioxidants and may also boost brain activity, according to researchers.



### Chili Peppers

If you like spicy, look no further than the chili pepper. You can use them fresh, dried, or powdered for a peppery pop. Research has shown that peppers also may boost your metabolism.

Source: WebMD, 2019