

20 Things You Need to Know About Ginger

Ginger has been used as a medicine for thousands of years to treat a wide range of ailments from diarrhea to arthritis. Besides its medicinal use, this tuber has been used as a culinary cooking spice for nearly 4,500 years.

Ginger products, like candy, are made from fresh or dried ginger root and the herb is available in many different forms. Fresh ginger root can also be prepared as a tea. Read on to learn more about this powerful herb that can be found in any grocery store across the country.

Author Quotes about Ginger:

1. Highly valued as a spice, ginger (*Zingiber officinale*) has been used medicinally for thousands of years by Chinese physicians. Ginger acts as an antioxidant and has antibacterial, anti-inflammatory, anti-clotting and pain-killing properties. It also improves liver function and lowers cholesterol as well as having beneficial effects on the heart. Ginger has anti-ulcer activity and improves the function of the muscles in the gut while helping to relieve spasm. Ginger is also valued for its warming properties.

- Nicola Reavley, *The New Encyclopedia of Vitamins, Minerals, Supplements and Herbs*

2. Ginger helps the body to sweat, so toxins are drawn to the skin's surface. To prepare the ginger bath, place half-inch slices of fresh ginger in boiling water over a stove; turn off the heat, and steep for thirty minutes. Remove the ginger, and add that water into a tub already filled with hot water.

- Brenda Watson and Leonard Smith, *The Detox Strategy: Vibrant Health in 5 Easy Steps*

3. Try some ginger ale — ginger is a known stomach soother. It's best to drink flat ginger ale at room temperature (cold beverages will irritate an upset stomach). Take tiny sips, especially if you have already vomited. If you can keep that down, sip a bit more. If you're out of ginger ale, you can try making a cup of ginger tea (with grated gingerroot). Some people even find relief by nibbling on a gingersnap.

- Carol Turkington, *The Hypericum Handbook: Nature's Antidepressant*

4. Ginger juice produces better recovery from symptoms of nausea than ondansetron, a commonly prescribed drug during chemotherapy.

- Andreas Moritz, *Cancer Is Not A Disease - It's A Survival Mechanism*

5. Ginger has been shown to inhibit the growth of tumors in the colon in animal studies.

- Andreas Moritz, *Cancer Is Not A Disease - It's A Survival Mechanism*

6. Ginger root extract (gingerols) inhibits the growth of *Helicobacter pylori* in the digestive tract, which is a bacterium linked to stomach cancer.

- Andreas Moritz, *Cancer Is Not A Disease - It's A Survival Mechanism*

7. Ginger stimulates blood circulation. These effects make it useful in treating a number of disorders marked by swelling and pain, such as arthritis. A three-year study of fifty-six people with rheumatoid arthritis found that about 75 percent of the subjects achieved relief from pain and swelling by taking powdered ginger.

- *Phyllis A. Balch, CNC, Prescription for Herbal Healing: An Easy-to-Use A-Z Reference to Hundreds of Common Disorders and Their Herbal Remedies*

8. If you take ginger for medicinal purposes, the powder form is the best because of its high concentration of nutrients. Take 4 grams (about 1 teaspoon) of powder divided in two to four doses over the course of the day. Ginger tea is a good herbal tonic for influenza because of its soothing qualities and its antiviral abilities. To make fresh ginger tea, cut a one-inch slice of fresh ginger-root into small slivers. Place the ginger in a pot and simmer at a near boil for about 15 minutes, then strain into a cup. Add a little honey to taste.

- *Bradley J. Willcox, D. Craig Willcox, and Makoto Suzuki, The Okinawa Program: How the World's Longest-Lived People Achieve Everlasting Health*

9. For centuries, ginger has been prescribed by Ayurvedic and Indian healers to treat the pain and stiffness associated with arthritis. Ginger contains natural anti-inflammatory agents called gingeroles. Fresh ginger, however, also contains compounds called shogaols, which can cause stomach irritation in some people.

- *Earl Mindell, R.Ph., Ph.D., Earl Mindell's Supplement Bible: A Comprehensive Guide to Hundreds of NEW Natural Products that Will Help You Live Longer, Look Better, Stay Healthier, ... and Much More!*

10. Ginger tea aids digestion and soothes heartburn, and powdered ginger capsules, tea, or candy control motion sickness and nausea without causing drowsiness. Fresh ginger root relieves the sting of minor burns and can prevent and fight heartburn by absorbing stomach acid. A ginger compress can soothe carpal tunnel syndrome.

- *Barrie R Cassileth, Ph.D., The Alternative Medicine Handbook: The Complete Reference Guide to Alternative and Complementary Therapies*

11. Ginger supplementation helped to modulate immune activity in a beneficial direction, suggesting usefulness in control of chronic inflammation and autoimmune diseases. Another study of ginger found that the herb could help control the risk factors involved in "syndrome X," which combine to greatly increase risk of type 2 diabetes — a condition that creates severe inflammation throughout the body because of the pro-inflammatory effects of high blood sugar and high insulin levels.

- *Freedom Press, Natural Cancer Cures: The Definitive Guide to Using Dietary Supplements to Fight and Prevent Cancer*

12. A double-blind study published in the Journal of the American Medical Association compared the effects of ginger and Dramamine, a common over-the-counter motion sickness drug, and found that ginger was actually more effective. In addition, ginger had none of the side effects — such as drowsiness — of the commercial drug. Ginger is an even more effective anticoagulant than garlic or onions; gin-gerol, one of its compounds, has a structure very much like that of aspirin, which also thins the blood. Ginger is a folk

remedy for menstrual cramps.

- Gary Null, *Get Healthy Now with Gary Null: A Complete Guide to Prevention, Treatment and Healthy Living*

13. Ginger is an inexpensive, effective, and nearly universally available remedy for inflammation and pain. It is used to treat cramping that accompanies constipation and to relieve peptic ulcers. In China, ginger has been put to the novel use of helping to turn breech babies by giving the mother ginger teas before delivery.

- Phyllis A. Balch, CNC, *Prescription for Herbal Healing: An Easy-to-Use A-Z Reference to Hundreds of Common Disorders and Their Herbal Remedies*

14. To test the ability of ginger to reduce inflammation, a preliminary clinical study was conducted on seven patients with rheumatoid arthritis in whom conventional drugs had provided only temporary or partial relief. One patient took 50 grams per day of lightly cooked ginger, while the remaining six took either 5 grams of fresh ginger or 0.1 to 1 gram of powdered ginger daily. All patients reported substantial improvement, including pain relief, increased joint mobility, and decreased swelling and morning stiffness.

- Michael Murray, N.D. and Joseph Pizzorno, N.D., *The Encyclopedia of Healing Foods*

15. Ginger has a long tradition of being very useful in alleviating symptoms of gastrointestinal distress, including the nausea and vomiting typical of pregnancy. Although the mechanism of action has yet to be elucidated, current thought is that this is due more to ginger's effects on the gastrointestinal tract than to any effects on the brain. Ginger's anti-vomiting action has been studied in the most severe form of pregnancy-related nausea and vomiting, known as hyperemesis gravidum.

- Michael T. Murray, N.D., Joseph E. Pizzorno, N.D., *Encyclopedia of Natural Medicine, Revised Second Edition*

16. Ginger also can settle stomach upset caused by food allergies. Ginger inhibits the production of immune-system components called cytokines, chemicals that create a long-term tendency toward inflammation.

- Phyllis A. Balch, CNC, *Prescription for Herbal Healing: An Easy-to-Use A-Z Reference to Hundreds of Common Disorders and Their Herbal Remedies*

17. In Japan, ginger's anti-parasitic effect is put to use in the preparation of sushi, which is traditionally eaten with pickled ginger. In the laboratory, ginger extracts have been shown to kill the anisakid worm, a parasite sometimes carried in raw fish, within sixteen hours, about the length of time the parasite would have to establish itself in the digestive tract after consumption of contaminated fish.

- Phyllis A. Balch, CNC, *Prescription for Herbal Healing: An Easy-to-Use A-Z Reference to Hundreds of Common Disorders and Their Herbal Remedies*

18. Fresh ginger is used to help break down high-protein foods such as meats and beans and lessen the effect of uric acids in the body from eating these foods. Dried ginger feeds the properties of foods and herbs to the lower extremities — the colon, kidneys, ovaries, sexual organs, and legs; it also treats motion sickness, and is most convenient in the form

of capsules or a tincture for this purpose. Ginger should not be used when signs of heat are present.

- *Paul Pitchford, Healing with Whole Foods: Asian Traditions and Modern Nutrition*

19. Garlic and cayenne are good remedies for exterior conditions such as the common cold.

- *Paul Pitchford, Healing with Whole Foods: Asian Traditions and Modern Nutrition*

20. Ginger tea is useful as a supplement in treating schistosomiasis, a parasitic disease increasingly prevalent among tourists returning to the United States

- *Phyllis A. Balch, CNC, Prescription for Herbal Healing: An Easy-to-Use A-Z Reference to Hundreds of Common Disorders and Their Herbal Remedies*