

# Nourishing News - Are Herbs Beneficial to Health?



Herbs have been used for centuries for medicinal purposes. Herbs are from the aromatic leaves of plants such as *rosemary*, mint, basil, parsley, dill, sage and *thyme*. Research regarding the health benefits of herbs is ongoing and some *studies* show evidence of a potential positive impact on health. Although much of the research is not definitive, herbs are nutrient-rich and can enhance the flavor. Try adding herbs to your meals to enjoy the added health *benefits* that they may provide.

## Health Benefits of Herbs

Herbs contain substances that may have a positive impact on health. Here are some herbs with potential health benefits:

- ◆ Basil - may boost immunity, while decreasing *bacteria*, yeast and mold growth. Although the studies are small, *basil* may decrease blood sugar and reduce anxiety.
- ◆ Cilantro - possible benefits to brain health, reduces *anxiety* and lowers blood sugar. It has an antimicrobial compound that may help protect against infections.
- ◆ Dill - rich in antioxidants, may reduce the risk of stroke, heart disease and lower LDL cholesterol.
- ◆ Mint - may improve digestion, reduce abdominal bloating and pain associated with *irritable* bowel syndrome.
- ◆ Oregano - rich in antioxidants, may help fight bacteria, and could reduce the risk of cancer and decrease inflammation.
- ◆ Parsley - an antioxidant that is rich in Vitamin C and K. Vitamin K helps blood clot and supports bone health. Parsley may decrease the risk of stroke and chronic medical conditions, including heart disease, diabetes and cancer.
- ◆ Rosemary - enhances *memory* and may reduce allergy symptoms and nasal congestion due to anti-inflammatory properties.
- ◆ Sage - may improve brain function and memory.



### WORD SEARCH Find the *bold italic* words

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T	B	A	S	I	L	Z	I	V	O	M
I	F	F	N	A	N	R	P	S	R	S
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### Fresh Herbs or Supplements?

It is best to use *fresh* or dried herbs in food and beverages instead of taking supplements. Herbal supplements are not regulated, may have potential side effects and safety concerns. In addition they may interfere with medication.

### Using & Storing Herbs

Herbs add a *variety* of flavor to food without adding salt. If you substitute fresh with dried herbs, use 1 part dried to 3-parts fresh. It is best to start with a little and add more as needed. A little goes a long way! Here are some common pairings:

- ◆ Basil, Cilantro, Parsley or Mint - add fresh leaves to salads. Mint can be added to water.
- ◆ Rosemary or Sage - pair with chicken, turkey, *lamb* or pork, mashed potatoes and butternut squash.
- ◆ Sage, Dill or Parsley - enhance the flavor of fish and potatoes.
- ◆ Oregano or Basil - add to pasta or tomato salad.



Store in airtight containers in a cool dark place. The shelf-life is 1-2 years depending on type, processing and *storage*. They can be used when past their prime; however, will lose most of their *aroma* and flavor.

