

Key Nutritional Components and Health Impacts of Selected Herbs and Spices

Herb / Spice	Key Nutritional Components and Health Impacts
Basil	Vitamin K and flavonoids (orientin, vicenin) protects cells from radiation and DNA damage; inhibits bacterial growth.
Black pepper	Vitamin K, manganese, and iron promotes digestion, prevents gas, and promotes sweating and urination.
Cayenne pepper	Capsaicin (an alkaloid) has antibacterial, anticarcinogenic, and anti-diabetic properties and analgesic properties used in topical pain relief.
Cilantro / Coriander	Flavonoids and phenolic acids control blood sugar and reduce inflammation and LDL (“bad”) cholesterol. (Cilantro is also known as Chinese parsley or fresh coriander in Indian cuisine; coriander also refers the dried seed of the same plant.)
Cinnamon	Volatile oils like cinnamaldelyhde have antimicrobial, anti-inflammatory and anticlotting properties and may help control blood sugar in diabetics.
Cumin	Rich in iron and cuminaldehyde; aids in digestion and nutrient absorption.
Dill	Includes vitamins A and C, folate, calcium, potassium, and flavonoids with antibacterial properties and antioxidants that reduce cell damage.
Garlic	Includes manganese, vitamin B ₆ and C, copper, selenium, and others; produces allicin, one of many sulfur-containing compounds that contribute to antioxidant and anti-inflammatory effects that may help reduce risk of some cancers and cardiovascular diseases.
Ginger	Volatile oils and phenols (e.g, gingerols) may have analgesic, sedative, anti-inflammatory, and antibacterial properties that improve bowel health, prevent motion sickness, and relieve migraines.
Mint	Contains perillyl alcohol and relieves irritable bowel syndrome symptoms like indigestion, dyspepsia, and colonic spasms.
Mustard	Rich in glucosinolates and selenium that may protect against some cancers.
Oregano	Volatile oils (e.g., thymol and carvacol) are antibacterials and antioxidants like rosmarinic acid protect cells from free radical damage.
Parsley	Includes folate, iron, and vitamins K, C, and A. Volatile oils like myristicin inhibit tumors while flavonoids (e.g., luteolin) are antioxidants.
Rosemary	Carnosic acid may prevent free radical damage in the brain and other antioxidants and anti-inflammatory compounds aid in digestion and enhance memory and cognition.
Sage	Flavonoids and phenolic acids have antioxidant and anti-inflammatory properties, and its oil enhances memory.
Thyme	Contains manganese and flavonoids like thymonin that acts as an antioxidant and may have antimicrobial properties.
Turmeric (Curcumin)	Volatile oils (e.g., curcumin) have anti-inflammatory and antioxidant action that may help sufferers of Crohn’s disease, rheumatoid arthritis, and cystic fibrosis.