

# Ginger

## A Spice or Medicine?



- Ginger, which is the underground stem or rhizome of the plant *Zingiber officinale* Roscoe, is an important cooking spice used around the world because of its interesting aroma and taste.
- Ginger has been used for its therapeutic value in a wide variety of diseases, especially gastrointestinal disorders, such as constipation, diarrhea, anorexia, colic, dyspepsia, nausea, vomiting, and motion sickness.
- Ginger may also have an impact on chronic diseases.

### Properties associated with Ginger

Ginger has anti-inflammatory, anti-thrombic, cholesterol-lowering, blood pressure-lowering, antimicrobial, antioxidant, anti-tumor, and hypoglycemic properties.

Because of its properties, ginger's effects have been studied in the following conditions: Heart Disease, Hypertension, Obesity, Cancer, Diabetes, Osteoarthritis and Bacterial Infections.

- Ginger compounds prevent new blood vessel formation and may help in cancer prevention.
- Ginger extract reduces inflammatory chemicals in arthritis.

Studies show that ginger compounds:

- Lower blood pressure
- Reduce platelet aggregation
- Reduce triglycerides
- Reduce LDL (bad) cholesterol
- Increase HDL (good) cholesterol
- Increase insulin levels
- Decrease glucose levels

### Can there be too much of a good thing?

Since ginger is used as a spice, the danger of consuming excess ginger is very low. And, according to the National Center for Complementary and Alternative Medicine (NCCAM), few side effects have been linked with ginger when taken in normal doses.

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