

## **Cinnamon: Not Just Good for Apple Pie and Hot Cider**

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Cinnamon is an evergreen tree which is small and bushy. The dried leaves of cinnamon, along with its dried inner bark are used all over the world as a spice or condiment. It has a pleasing fragrance and a warm, sweet and aromatic taste. As a nutritive herb, an herb that also is used as food, it can be taken for long periods of time.

The cinnamon tree was known to ancient physicians even before 2700 BC. The Chinese used the bark of this tree as a medicine. Chinese Medicine categorizes cinnamon as a Kidney Yang (warming and drying) tonic that chases cold and damp away. It is great for times when you feel that the cold and damp of fall and winter are getting you down.

Cinnamon is an effective remedy for the common cold. Coarsely powdered and boiled in a glass of water with a pinch of pepper powder and honey, it can be used to help ease the symptoms of sore throat, cough and flu. Scientists tell us that cinnamon is a potent anti-viral, anti-bacterial, and anti-fungal food.

Medicinally, cinnamon is also specific for low back pain, nausea, vomiting, arthritis and diarrhea -- particularly when the symptoms are associated with feeling cold or with cold weather. It is a classic astringent: not only does it "dry up" the excess damp of diarrhea and mucus, it also reduces many types of internal bleeding, including lung, intestinal, nasal, urinary, and uterine.

Studies have also shown the benefits of cinnamon on regulating blood sugar in people with diabetes. In a study of 60 people with type 2 diabetes, intake of 1, 3, or 6 grams of cinnamon per day reduced glucose, triglyceride, LDL cholesterol and total cholesterol

The researchers found that cinnamon rekindled the ability of fat cells in diabetics to respond to insulin and greatly increased glucose removal. It is believed that a substance in cinnamon called MHCP is the main reason for its beneficial results.