

The Natural Kitchen Cures For Acid Reflux

How to Heal Your Digestion Painlessly Without Dangerous Drugs or Needless Surgery

There's a dangerous digestive epidemic that has millions of people suffering needlessly each day.

This burning sensation causes heartburn... upset stomachs... sleepless nights... intense nausea...and can even turn deadly.

More than 60 million Americans suffer from heartburn more than once per month, and an estimated 15 million suffer from it every day.¹

Acid reflux is more than just an uncomfortable gut sensation: left untreated, it may call for dangerous surgical procedures, cause permanent damage, or develop into life threatening conditions. Long-term indigestion can develop into Barrett's esophagus, damaging the internal tissue of the esophagus.² A study of gastric reflux patients linked the condition to an elevated risk of developing throat cancer.³

Most medical treatments focus on suppressing the excess acid and there's no shortage of remedies. The antacid market has grown by leaps and bounds. The most commonly advertised products that have been lauded as breakthroughs in acid reflux are the Proton Pump Inhibitor (PPI) medications. Pharmaceutical companies have made billions of dollars through PPI prescriptions. In fact, they are now the third-highest selling class of drugs in the U.S., earning more than \$13.9 billion in sales in 2010.⁴

Despite the growing number of remedies, people are still silently suffering. What most people don't realize is that the very medications that they think are helping them are actually making the problem worse.

The Dirty Secrets of Ineffective PPIs Infections, Hip Fractures...And Even Death

Drugs such as "Prevacid," "Nexium," "Protonix," "Prilosec," "Aciphex," "Dexilant," and other PPIs reduce the backwash of acid to the esophagus by decreasing the amount of acid in the stomach and intestines.

PPIs shut down the stomach's proton pump, the mechanism that increases the acid levels. Many PPIs are designed to work over an extended period of time such as 24 hours, or sometimes even two to three days.

Imagine—no pain for three days! No upsets after eating. No waking up in the middle of the night.

While this sounds like a miracle cure, there are a few reasons why PPIs are not only ineffective but dangerous.

PPIs are only recommended to be used for eight to 12 weeks, but many are used for much longer because they are either overprescribed or patients become dependent on them. Many serious health conditions, such as osteoporosis and *clostridium difficile*, can develop from long-term use.

How does this happen? PPIs are designed to treat a symptom—the overproduction of acid. But acid is needed to properly digest food. Without the proper amount of acid, your stomach cannot break down your food to extract nutrients from it. Your body loses vital nutrients such as calcium and magnesium.

The FDA recently issued a warning about PPIs that, when taken for a year or longer, can cause patients to have low magnesium levels.⁵ Not having enough of this essential nutrient can cause muscle spasms, irregular heartbeat, convulsions, and even osteoporosis. A study published by the *British Medical Journal* showed that those who regularly used PPIs for two years or more were 35% more likely to have hip fractures.⁶

Even worse, this suppression of stomach acid can upset the delicate balance of healthy bacteria in the digestive tract. Among the most dangerous bacteria is *clostridium difficile* (*c. difficile*). As the bacteria develop, they release toxins into the intestines to cause *c. difficile* colitis. This infection can be mild or life threatening, with symptoms ranging from severe abdominal pain, watery chronic diarrhea, loss of appetite, fever, weight loss, and blood or pus in the stool. The infection, which can also cause holes in the intestines, can be fatal if not treated immediately.

A five-year study of patients who used various acid reflux drugs concluded that the more frequent the use of PPIs, the more likely the change of developing *c. difficile*. According to the study, the risk of nosocomial *c. difficile* increases from 0.3% for patients not receiving acid suppressive therapy to 1.4% in those receiving PPI therapy more than daily.⁷

So not only are PPIs masking a deeper disorder, they are also causing additional health problems.

The truth is that acid reflux is not something that needs to be suppressed but a sign that something else in our bodies needs to be addressed. There are several reasons why

we get heartburn, and many natural, safe cures to fix it once you discover the real underlying problem.

In fact, there are many simple remedies that you already have at your fingertips. Many can be found in your kitchen or your spice rack. Some of them are easily found at your local health food store or in supplements. And a couple of them are simple lifestyle shifts that you can make.

But before we get into the cures, let's take a look at what acid reflux disease really is and what causes it.

What is Acid Reflux Disease?

Heart burn, or acid reflux, is the burning sensation that many people experience particularly after a meal. In between the esophagus and the stomach is a valve called the lower esophageal sphincter (LES). This valve allows your chewed food to pass between your throat and your stomach, while protecting your esophagus from exposure to your stomach acids. The inside of your stomach contains acidic gastric juices that break down your food into the nutrients your body needs to feed all of your cells. In fact, the acid is essential to digestion and your well-being.

The trouble comes when the LES fails to contract enough to block the gastric juices. The burning sensation that occurs is stomach acid coming through to your esophagus. Of course, it's not unusual that you may have a little bit of an upset stomach or burning sensation from time to time. But when it occurs weekly, or even daily, acid reflux can be a sign of a bigger problem lurking in your digestive system.

What Causes Acid Reflux?

The most common reasons why people suffer from excess acid are related to what we eat, how we live, and how we feel.

Physiology: A Weighty Issue

It's no secret that obesity and being overweight is a growing problem. According to the CDC, 35.7% of U.S. adults and 16.9% of children are obese.⁸ If you add in the number of overweight individuals, about one in three Americans are overweight or obese, and one in four Canadians.

As weight increases, the risk for developing other health conditions increases dramatically. Weight-related health conditions can happen at any age—that's why the condition once known as "adult-onset diabetes" is now called type 2 diabetes, since overweight children are now exhibiting those symptoms. Acid reflux is now occurring more frequently in people of all ages. When belly fat increases, this excess weight can put pressure on the esophagus. This weakens the LES and its ability to allow acid to pass through.

A study conducted in Norway that tracked 30,000 Norwegians showed that the number of people reporting symptoms of acid reflux had risen 30% in the past decade. Dr. Eivind Ness-Jensen, a gastroenterologist involved with the study, noted that part of the reason why was because of expanding waistlines. “There’s an increasing weight in the population. That’s probably the most important factor,” he said.⁹

Whether you have a weight problem or not, overeating can also trigger the symptoms that acid reflux brings. The stomach is relatively small; it can hold about two fist-size portions of food comfortably. While your stomach will stretch if you eat more than it can handle, overstuffing it with foods can cause digestive enzymes to wash back into the esophagus.

Physical Misalignment

Sometimes acid reflux occurs when the stomach is out of alignment. When you have a hiatal hernia, a portion of the stomach protrudes over the diaphragm, the muscular wall that separates the chest cavity from the abdomen. This misalignment forces stomach acid up into the esophagus, causing the typical burning sensation.

Lying down after eating can cause a temporary misalignment. So, if you eat right before bedtime, or lie down on your back after eating, you can get an acid backlash.

Food Sensitivities and Intolerances

The LES is a very strong muscle, but it can be weakened by eating foods that are consistently disagreeable. Some of the most difficult foods to digest are alcohol, coffee, fried foods, tomatoes, and other acidic foods.

Additionally, many people are continually irritating their digestive systems through food sensitivities. When your body is sensitive to certain foods, it will have an inflammatory reaction to that food when eaten. While you may not be able to feel this reaction, chronic, low-level inflammation can cause your body to constantly be in high alert and can trigger an immune response against the offending food. Triggered too often, the immune response can turn into auto-immune disorders where the body mistakenly attacks its own healthy tissues.

The most common food sensitivities are:

- Wheat and gluten
- Soy
- Milk
- Peanuts
- Eggs
- Tree nuts
- Shellfish

Eating any of these foods on a regular basis—if you are sensitive to them—can cause indigestion and discomfort, and worse inflammatory responses if not addressed.¹⁰

The Lifestyle That's Making it Worse

Life continues to move faster and faster. The ability to multitask is often regarded as a skill or talent. For many people, sitting and eating a meal without distractions is a rare occasion.

Living a fast-paced lifestyle can wreak havoc on digestion. In a study, researchers found that high stress increased the spontaneous excessive swallowing, which is associated with various digestive disorders.¹¹

The digestive system is particularly sensitive to stress because of the large network of neurotransmitters within it. This network is so extensive and connected to our brains that it is often called the second brain. While it doesn't do the kind of thinking that our brains do, it does allow us to feel the inner workings of our system, and it is closely tied to our emotions.¹² When you feel butterflies in your stomach or have a "gut" feeling about something, it is the enteric nervous system that is offering information. If this delicate system is overwhelmed with emotion, digestion can easily become upset.

As you see, digestion is a complex process. Many times, acid reflux is not simply a problem of too much acid, but one or more underlying conditions that causes that burning sensation.

The secrets to healthy digestion are not in a medicine bottle. They are in your kitchen and in the habits that you develop over time. These natural remedies get to the root of the problem and help your body heal completely. What you will learn in the next few pages may very well change your life.

Your Natural Cures for Acid Reflux

The Quick Fixes

What can you do if you have an immediate problem? Here are a few quick fixes that can soothe your digestive troubles right away:

Put Out The Fire With Water

With all of the antacid remedies on the market, it may seem silly to think that a glass of water can soothe the burning. However, drinking water often works as well (or better) than over-the-counter antacids. In fact, a study of healthy patients showed that water increased gastric pH levels in just one minute, faster than the antacid (which took two minutes), or a PPI, which had a delayed but prolonged effect.²⁹

Water mixed with a little cayenne pepper can also help soothe the stomach. This also may sound counterintuitive, as cayenne is usually associated with a burning sensation. But cayenne has natural anti-inflammatory properties that heal digestive issues and prevent ulcers.²⁵ Drink ½ teaspoon of cayenne pepper in a glass of water for a simple soothing remedy.

The Acid-Alkaline Quick Fix

Is it a problem of too much acid or not enough? Your first quick-fix solution will depend on the answer to this question.

Apple cider vinegar (ACV) is known as a health tonic that has been used for centuries. Raw, unfiltered ACV is anti-inflammatory and can help raise stomach acids if this is the problem. Drink 1-2 tablespoons of apple cider vinegar—either straight or diluted in a glass of water.¹³ If the burning dissipates, you need more acid in your stomach.

Sodium bicarbonate, or baking soda, has been found to be a potent cure for cancer, infections, and digestive disorders like acid reflux. If you have too much acid, try drinking baking soda. One tablespoon in 1/2 cup of water should do the trick. This solution will help you reduce your acid levels.¹⁴

Digestive-Healing Food Cures

The Doctors Health Press' own expert, Dr. Victor Marchione, M.D., is a leading champion of a new form of medicine. He's using scientifically proven foods to heal diseases in brilliant new ways. He "prescribes" functional foods to help patients clean out clogged arteries... lower cholesterol... prevent cancer... lose weight... and even help digestive disorders.

Here are just a few food cures that can help soothe your stomach and replenish healthy gut bacteria:

Aloe Vera: These diverse succulents can be used to soothe burned skin and wounds, and the juice can be taken internally as a laxative. It also has antiviral properties, so drinking small amounts of the juice can help heal any ailments that may be impeding digestion. Fresh aloe vera juice can be found in most health food stores. Read the directions carefully on the bottle before taking it, as its laxative properties can be very strong.

Cabbage Juice: This cruciferous vegetable is rich in antioxidants and phytonutrients that have anti-cancer properties. Its phytochemical compounds are known for healing and soothing the gastric lining and for being powerful blood cleansers. Cabbage is also known for its ulcer healing properties. The secret is in an antipeptic ulcer factor called ascorbigen (formerly known as Vitamin U). In a small study, peptic ulcers healed in an average of 10 days when treated with fresh cabbage juice, compared with standard treatments that averaged 37 days.²⁶ Cabbage juice oxidizes very quickly, losing most of its valuable nutrients. It should be consumed right after juicing when it still tastes sweet and fresh; it gets bitter and smells pungent if it sits.

Papaya: This sweet tropical fruit contains the enzymes papain and chymopapain, which break down proteins and soothe the stomach by promoting a healthy acidic

environment. Papaya enzymes also help ward off pathogens, which could also cause digestive issues.¹⁵ If you can't find the fresh fruit, most health food stores and online stores carry papaya extract tablets that will help relieve heart burn.

Pineapple: Another powerful healer from the tropics, pineapple contains bromelain, a key enzyme that fights inflammation, reduces swelling, and speeds the digestion of proteins. It's also rich in vitamin C, which helps fight bacteria and inflammation, offers cell protection from antioxidants, and boosts the immune system. Fresh pineapple offers the greatest benefits; it can be eaten raw or blended into a fresh juice or smoothie.

Licorice: This root is often made into an extract called deglycyrrhizinated licorice that relieves heart burn, peptic ulcer, and gastritis. If you have hypertension, you should avoid licorice because it does increase blood pressure. You can take 1-2 tablets 30 minutes before eating to relieve digestive pain.¹⁶

Lacto-Fermented Foods: Homemade pickles, sauerkraut, and kimchi are some of the healthiest additions that you can put in your diet. Lactobaccilli in fermented vegetables enhances their digestibility, increase vitamin levels, and produces helpful enzymes, antibiotic, and anti-carcinogenic substances.¹⁷ When you make these foods yourself, using the traditional fermentation method of just salt, water, and vegetables, your fermented foods will contain healthy doses of live, gut-friendly bacteria. Its main byproduct, lactic acid, is what helps feed healthy gut flora and enhances digestion. Eat just a couple of tablespoons of one of these condiments per day and your guts will start to heal themselves.

Homemade Sauerkraut ²⁷

Make your own gut-healing lacto-fermented vegetables. Sauerkraut is one of the easiest recipes to make.

Makes 1 quart

Ingredients:

1 medium cabbage, cored and shredded

1 tablespoon caraway seeds

1 tablespoon sea salt

4 tablespoons whey – or, if not available, add 1 additional tablespoon sea salt

Method:

- In a bowl, mix cabbage with caraway seeds, sea salt, and whey. Pound with a wooden pounder or meat hammer for about 10 minutes to release juices.
- Place in a quart-sized, wide-mouth mason jar and press down firmly with pounder until juices come to the top of the cabbage. The top of the cabbage should be at least 1 inch below the top of the jar.
- Cover tightly and keep at room temperature for about 3 days before transferring to cold storage. The sauerkraut may be eaten immediately, but the flavor and health benefits improve with age.

Potato Juice: A traditional European folk remedy, potato juice has been used to ease digestive problems, promote healthier skin, and heal ulcers. Among various vitamins and minerals, they also contain alkaline salts, which have been shown to have anti-inflammatory properties. In a pilot study on dyspeptic patients, the majority reported that drinking 100 ml or more of potato juice twice per day for a week improve their stomach symptoms.²⁸ You can juice potatoes that are ripe, well washed, and have had their eyes removed. You only need a small amount of juice for its healing properties. You can drink potato juice on its own or mix it with cabbage or other vegetables juices.

Change That Unhealthy Lifestyle

Intuitive Eating and Slowing Down

Some of the simplest changes can be from slowing down and paying attention to how and when you eat. These suggestions will not only stimulate healthy digestion but also reduce stress at the same time.

Deep breathing is one of the easiest ways to relax and prepare yourself for digestion. All you need to do is sit up straight, and take a few deep, slow, regular breaths. For best results, do this exercise without distractions—you should only be sitting and breathing.

When you eat, make sure to sit down at a table and focus only on eating. Calm conversation is ok, but don't distract yourself with reading, email, television, or anything else that will take you away from the eating experience. The more you can focus on enjoying your food, the more likely you will digest it well and enjoy it completely.

Chew your food well. Digestion begins in the mouth when you are chewing. Your saliva helps to start break down the food before it is swallowed and goes into your stomach. The action of chewing prepares your stomach by stimulating the production of digestive enzymes. If you chew your food enough—at least 30 times—by the time it reaches your stomach it will be ready to be digested.

Eat only until you are satisfied. If you're used to overeating, it may take a few days or weeks to understand the sensation of being satisfied rather than full. Practice eating more slowly than usual and putting your fork down between bites. Before each bite, ask yourself silently if you are still hungry. If the answer is yes, take the next bite. When the answer is no, stop. You may be surprised at how much less food it takes for you to feel satisfied when you eat this way.

You'll get multiple benefits from using all of these techniques: you will get more nutritional benefit from your food because you'll digest more effectively. You can also reduce weight while you reduce your stress. And ultimately, you'll enjoy eating a lot more.

Dietary Changes That Can Save Your Life

Changing what you habitually eat can have a huge impact on reducing acid reflux symptoms. Temporarily reducing or eliminating the foods that cause the most flareups

(such as alcohol, coffee, fried foods, chocolate, tomatoes, citrus, and dairy) will be very beneficial.

Fresh plant foods provide many nutritional benefits and help heal digestion. They have a soothing, alkalizing effect on the body. Adding more fresh fruits, vegetables, and legumes into your daily diet gives your body more fiber which works as an internal scrub brush for your digestive system. Fresh fruits and vegetables also have high water content. Keeping your system well hydrated is essential to good digestion as water helps move waste through and out of the body.

If you're not used to eating lots of fruits and vegetables, start by adding them slowly into your meals—add a side green salad, put more vegetables into your soup or sandwich. Add fresh fruit into a smoothie or try eating fruit for dessert.

Food Sensitivities to Watch Out For

Could you possibly be gluten or lactose intolerant? Does your digestive system flare up when you eat nuts, eggs, or other specific foods?

Your doctor may not be able to test you for sensitivities. They are not the same as allergies and are more difficult to detect.

To find out if you're sensitive to certain foods, try an elimination diet. Start with the foods that more people are sensitive to than any others: gluten and dairy. Gluten containing foods include wheat, barley, rye and oats. Dairy includes milk, cheese, butter, yogurt, and ice cream.

If you don't notice a difference, try eliminating the other common sensitive foods: soy, peanuts, eggs, tree nuts, and shellfish.

Introduce each food, one at a time, to see if you have any reactions. If you've eliminated all of the foods for at least a month, and you have a sensitivity, you should notice a difference when you add that food back into your diet.

As you eliminate the causes, you can start adding in the spices and foods that will heal your digestive system.

The Herbal and Spice Apothecary

According to molecular biologist and cancer researcher Bharat B. Aggarwal, PhD, many spices have multiple healing properties that not only cure diseases but enhance overall well-being. For acid reflux sufferers, adding any of these spices to everyday cooking or consuming as teas can help get rid of indigestion.

Basil: This fragrant leaf is known as a stress-busting spice. Researchers in India found that several compounds in basil have anti-stress effects, and normalize cortisol, lower blood sugar, and stopped adrenal hypertrophy. Holy basil, also known as Tulsi, inhibits the formation of stress-induced stomach ulcers.²⁵

Holy basil is often made into a tea. You can also use basil raw in salads, or add it at the end of cooking in Italian, Mediterranean, or Thai dishes.

Black Pepper: According to a study by the McCormick Science Institute, black pepper increases stomach acid secretions and improves the movement of food as studied in lab animals.¹⁸ Black pepper may also increase the bioavailability of certain nutrients. A study published in the *Journal of the American College of Nutrition*, found that just 1.5 grams, or about 1/4 teaspoon, increased transit time through the gastrointestinal tract.¹⁷ Slow digestion is a common cause to many digestive disorders, including acid reflux.

For best results, you can grind pepper into most of your dishes—your breakfast eggs, in savory meat dishes, on sandwiches, in soups, etc. Pepper goes with just about everything. And since you only need 1/4 teaspoon to get the benefits, a little grind can go a long way.

Caraway: This little seed has been used for centuries to freshen breath and smooth digestion. The reason is because of carvone, a component of caraway oil that relaxes spasms in the digestive tract. According to a study published in *American Family Physician*, a combination of caraway and peppermint oil has been found to be effective in treating non-ulcer dyspepsia.¹⁹

Caraway can be somewhat of an acquired taste, and its flavor is similar to fennel or licorice. It's often used in German cooking, and it pairs well with meat stews, sausages, and cabbage dishes. Use it as flavoring in your raw sauerkraut to boost your digestive power. It also can be used to flavor baked apple dishes, or with cottage cheese or yogurt.

Cardamom: Also known as the “Queen of Spices,” this round seed has more than 25 volatile oils, which give it its unique fragrance and flavor. Cineole, the most volatile, has been found to be an antiseptic that kills bacteria that cause bad breath, and has also been found to slow or stop aspirin or alcohol-induced ulcers in laboratory animals.²⁵

Cardamom pairs well with sweet foods—try it on fruit desserts, in your morning oatmeal, with recipes that use vanilla. It also pairs well with Indian flavored meals and lamb dishes.

Chili: It may seem ironic that chili is recommended for stomach ailments, but many studies have shown that capsaicin is good for healing digestive maladies. Indian researchers in the *Critical Review in Food Science and Nutrition* note that capsaicin inhibits acid secretion, stimulates alkali, and mucus secretions which helps heal ulcers.²⁰ Capsaicin also kills *H. pylori*, the bacteria that causes ulcers.²⁵

Chili goes well in many different dishes. It's often used as the heat in Mexican, Chinese, Korean, Thai, Jamaican, and Cajun cooking. Add to stews, soups, curries, stir fries, in beans, tacos, and other foods.

Coriander: This ancient spice has been used for thousands of years for its health benefits. Traditional Chinese Medicine uses it to treat all kinds of digestive ailments, and Ayurvedic physicians use it as a diuretic, among other remedies. Coriander contains linalool and geranyl acetate, volatile oils which have cell-protective antioxidant powers. These small seeds pack a powerful punch nutritionally, and their antioxidants protect the stomach lining.

In addition, research from Indian scientists show that coriander lowers blood sugar and increases insulin response in diabetic rats.²¹ This means that not only can coriander help you combat your tummy troubles, but it can also help keep your body at a healthy weight by regulating its response to sugar.

Coriander can be found in many foods that Americans already eat, such as hot dogs, sausages, lunch meats, pastries, and cookies. Unfortunately, these are also many of the foods that can cause health problems if eaten habitually. Instead of eating those unhealthy fast foods, you can get a healthy dose of coriander by adding it into your own homemade dishes. It pairs well with almost anything—it's better combined with other spices, like cumin. Add whole seeds to casseroles, stews, marinades, in homemade pickles, and in spice rubs for grilled and roasted meats.

Ginger: This root is an adaptogen that is prized in Chinese healing. It helps soothe nausea, adds digestive heat, and increase circulation. It helps move waste out of the body. A study conducted by scientists from the University of Michigan and National Ying-Ming University in Taiwan found that ginger limited vasopressin, a chemical that regulates levels of water, salt, and blood sugar, that is also key in regulating the sensation of nausea.²⁵

In two randomized, double-blind studies, healthy volunteers who ingested ginger capsules had accelerated gastric emptying time compared with those who took a placebo.²² Food that sits in the stomach for too long can cause indigestion. Eating ginger with food helps prevent it.

Not only does ginger increase digestive power, it also has many healing properties. It is rich in phytonutrients called gingerols, which are antioxidant, anti-inflammatory, antibacterial, and antiviral. Studies by the McCormick Institute show that its antimicrobial properties can combat H. Pylori infection, the main cause of ulcers.²³

Ginger can be used in many ways—to flavor Asian style dishes, in stir fries, in curries, and in Indian cooking.

To make as a tea, take 1 inch of ginger root, peel, and slice into coins, and boil in 2 cups

water for about 15 minutes. Squeeze in 1/2 lemon and add 2 teaspoons of honey per cup (if desired) to temper the spiciness of the ginger.

Juniper Berry: This tree produces tiny pine cones that are particularly good for digestive disorders such as relieving intestinal gas, heartburn, bloating, and loss of appetite, as well as gastrointestinal infections. It is also known to have diuretic properties.²⁵

Juniper is the flavoring in gin. But you don't have to start drinking martinis to get its benefits. You can use it in spice rubs for game meats such as pheasant, goose, wild boar, or buffalo. Or use it with purple fruits such as plums, blackberries, and blueberries.

Kokum: This exotic Indian spice that has hydroxycitric acid (HCA) which helps with weight loss by acting like an appetite suppressant and also a fat-burning element.²⁵ Ayurvedic physicians use kokum to prevent stomach ulcers. Kokum has antibacterial properties that protect against peptic ulcers, one of the prime ailments that lead to stomach cancer.

Kokum is mostly used in Indian dishes. It works well with curries, sauces, in lentils and in yogurt.

Marjoram: This Mediterranean herb is a nutritional powerhouse that offers multiple healing benefits. In a study by Iranian doctors, Marjoram increases pepsin, a protein-digesting enzyme, by 30 percent.²⁴ Marjoram has also been found to protect laboratory animals from chemically induced ulcers.²⁵ Marjoram may also be one of the key ingredients to the health-giving properties of a Mediterranean diet – when it was sprinkled on salad, it was found to double the antioxidant properties of the food.²⁵

Marjoram has a slightly bittersweet and mild flavor. It goes well with most dishes, but it especially enhances Mediterranean-style foods.

Turmeric: Known as the “poor man's saffron,” this bright yellow herb is a powerhouse when it comes to healing. This rhizome's healing power is linked to its biggest active ingredient, curcumin, a compound that is rich in antioxidants and that provides medicinal-strength anti-inflammatory actions that do everything from relieving pain to improving circulation. It inhibits the development of several cancers, including breast, colon, cervical, lung, pancreatic, prostate, and skin cancer. In fact, studies have shown that turmeric, taken as a supplement, can be more effective than pharmaceutical drugs – without their side effects.²⁵ Traditionally, it has been used for a wide variety of ailments, including as an antacid to soothe digestive issues, to speed wound healing and prevent infection, a stimulant to improve blood flow, and a decongestant to clear nasal passages.

In Indian cooking, it is used in virtually every dish. You can't go wrong adding turmeric to curries, bean dishes, sautéed vegetables, and other foods that have Indian influence.

You can also add powdered turmeric to your morning scrambled eggs for an anti-oxidant boost.

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