

Spice it up for Fall

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~ *By Kirsten Antony, R.N., C.R.* ~

Feelings of comfort, warmth and fond memories of family gatherings can be evoked by certain aromas. This time of year, pumpkin spice fills the air and the products seem to be endless. Everything from candles to vodka; from shampoo to coffee have pumpkin spice on their labels. Manufacturers of these products know that the idea of this aroma brings to mind those comfy-cozy feelings of Autumn and with that, more and more products become “Pumpkin Spiced”!

What exactly is pumpkin spice? Pumpkin spice is a variety of spices. Typically the combination includes the spices of cinnamon, ginger, nutmeg, allspice, and cloves. These spices not only have a wonderful aroma, but are also full of health benefits.

All of these spices contain phytonutrients which are plant compounds that help promote healing. Phytonutrients are anti-inflammatory and have been used to combat health problems such cancer, cardiovascular disease, type 2 diabetes and Alzheimer’s disease. India, which has documented use of spices for over 3,000 years, has the world’s lowest rates of Alzheimer’s disease. It is also in India where Ayurvedic medicine is practiced. According to the principles of Ayurvedic medicine, all the above spices are spices that are warming in nature to the body. It is interesting to note this as we see as the weather gets cooler, we enjoy spices that can balance the body.

Generally speaking, many of the above spices have similar health benefits due to the phytonutrients. Cinnamon, for example, has

been shown to have the ability to help control blood sugar in type 2 diabetes. Cinnamon may also be used to prevent and treat cancer, cholesterol issues, high blood pressure and heart disease. Ginger may also be helpful in treatment of cancer and cholesterol. In addition, ginger is popularly used in treatment of digestive disorders such as nausea and motion sickness. It also has anti-inflammatory properties which are useful in managing arthritis.

Nutmeg has been used to prevent and treat cancer and cholesterol issues as well and assist in healing anxiety, depression and memory loss. Allspice has many healing actions in the body including assisting with high blood pressure management, menopause, oral health conditions and is known as a mild pain reliever. Cloves are also used for oral health and can be a wonderful analgesic. Cloves can help fight infections, cancer and blood clots.

Even though spices have been used for thousands of years and are natural substances found in many foods, it is advised that you do research when taking in anything to be used as a medicine. Please consult your doctor if you intend on using herbs or spices and/or if you are being treated for a certain condition and/or being medicated for a certain condition.

Adding spices to foods are a wonderfully healthy and delicious way to receive the benefits nature intended for the human body. Keep in mind all these potential benefits for a healthy and happy body, mind and spirit as you enjoy pumpkin spice this Fall. If you partake in pumpkin pie this Thanksgiving, please enjoy and savor every bite!

Recipe for Crustless Pumpkin Pie Ingredients:

1 can pumpkin

1 can evaporated milk 3 egg whites

½ cup sugar (or sugar substitute)

½ cup all-purpose flour (may substitute with gluten free all-purpose flour) 1 ½ tsp pumpkin pie spice

¾ tsp baking powder 1/8 tsp salt

Heat oven to 350 degrees. Spray pie plate with nonstick cooking spray. Blend above ingredients together and pour into pie plate. Bake 50-55 minutes. Cool for 15 minutes.

Enjoy!



Kirsten Antony is a Registered Nurse and Certified Reflexologist and has been practicing Holistic Nursing for over 20 years. Kirsten's business, Heel Your Feet, offers mobile Medical Pedicures and Reflexology to Denver area residents. If you are having trouble trimming toenails, suffer from ingrown nails, corns, calluses or foot pain, please call Kirsten for information or a foot care appointment.

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