

# Health benefits of elaichi or cardamom

P Sampath January 30, 2014

Elaichi or cardamom is one of the most common spices seen in an Indian household. Not only is it added to sweet and savoury dishes it is also used as a natural mouth freshener. But the humble green pod has a lot more to offer – healthy wise. Here are some benefits of elaichi.

## 1. Improves digestion:

Ever wonder why elaichi is a staple addition to saunf after meal? Well, that is because elaichi is carminative in nature and helps speed up digestion, reduces inflammation of the stomach lining, fights heart burn and nausea. It is known to soothe the mucous membranes, making it function better thereby relieving the symptoms of acidity and an upset stomach. Moreover, according to Ayurvedic texts it also reduces the water and air properties in the stomach making it more capable of digesting food efficiently.

**Tip:** If you suffer from **indigestion** this tip is for you. Take a two to three pods of cardamom, a small piece of ginger, a few pieces of cloves and a few dhanias seeds. Grind them well and eat this with warm water. It acts as an instant remedy for indigestion, bloating and gas.

Another great remedy for **headaches caused due to indigestion** is to make cardamom tea. All you need to do is infuse it into some regular green tea and drink it while it's warm. This mixture works well right at the onset of the symptoms of indigestion.

## 2. Beats bad breath:

If you have bad breath and have tried every sort of remedy out there, give elaichi a try. The spice is packed with antibacterial properties, has a strong flavour and a pleasant smell. Moreover since it helps improve your digestive system – which is known to be one of the

leading causes for bad breath – it is very effective in weeding out the root cause of the problem.

**Tip:** Chew on a pod of elaichi after every meal. You could alternatively drink some elaichi tea every morning to help detoxify and strengthen your digestive system.

### **3. Relieves acidity:**

The essential oils in elaichi help strengthen the mucosal lining of your stomach, making elaichi a great remedy for acidity. Another way it helps is by increasing the amount of saliva you secrete. On chewing the pod, it releases a slew of essential oils that stimulate your salivary glands, which in-turn stimulate your stomach lining to work better, improving your appetite and reduces the amount of acidity you experience. Elaichi's essential oils also impart a cooling flavour and sensation that help reduce the burning you feel during an attack of acidity.

**Tip:** Chew on elaichi regularly after every meal. The best way to keep acidity at bay is to avoid sitting right after you have eating; instead walk around a bit while chewing on the elaichi pod and you should feel much better.

### **4. Helps alleviate respiratory illnesses:**

Cardamom helps by increasing circulation of blood within your lungs which helps relieve breathing problems like asthma, cold and cough. In Ayurveda elaichi is known as a warm spice, which heats up the body internally, helping in the expulsion of phlegm and relieving chest congestion.

**Tip:** If you have a cold, cough or a congested chest, elaichi is the best natural remedy to relieve the symptoms. All you need to do is add a few drop of elaichi's essential oil to your vessel of steaming water during steam inhalation.

### **5. Regularises your heart rate:**

Packed with minerals like potassium, calcium and magnesium, cardamom is a gold mine for essential electrolytes. One of the main components of your blood, body fluids and cells is potassium. With its abundant supply of this essential mineral ealichi helps regularise your heart rate and keeps your blood pressure under control.

Read more about causes, symptoms, diagnosis and treatment of heart disease.

**Tip:** Add elaichi to your daily meals or simply drink elaichi tea to reap its heart healthy benefits.

## **6. Fights anaemia:**

Another major component of elaichi is copper, iron and essential vitamins like riboflavin, vitamin C and niacin. Known for its immense importance in the production of red blood cells and cellular metabolism, copper, riboflavin, vitamin C and niacin in addition to iron are great to fight anaemia and relieve the symptoms that one experiences due to the condition.

**Tip:** Add a pinch or two of elaichi powder and turmeric to a glass of warm milk. You can add a little sugar for taste if you like. Drink this every night to help relieve weakness and other symptoms of anaemia.

## **7. Detoxifies the body and fight free radicals:**

Cardamom is a great source of mineral manganese. Manganese is the key to production of an enzyme that scavenges and destroys free radicals. Apart from that elaichi also has very strong detoxifying properties that help to cleanse the body and protect it from diseases like cancer.

**Tip:** to help detoxify your body, try this Ayurvedic detox diet. Alternatively you could add elaichi to your daily meal and tea, to reap its benefits.

*Elaichi* is a potent tonic and stimulant.