

How to Use Garlic Against Stress and Toxins for a Better Mood

Expert
Reviewed

Three Methods: [Incorporating Garlic into Your Meals](#) [Making Garlic Tea](#) [Taking Garlic in Other Ways](#)

Garlic is a hardy plant that grows all over the world and has a very long history of use as a food and as a medicine. Garlic has been used medicinally since at least ancient Egypt. It has been used to treat high blood pressure, high blood lipids, diabetes, vaginal infections, stomach infections with *H. pylori*, as well as various skin infections. It is also used to increase the circulation of blood and may be useful to increase circulation to various organs, such as the kidney and liver. In general, garlic is considered very safe as a food and as a supplement, even for long-term use.^{[1][2]}

Method
1

Incorporating Garlic into Your Meals

1 Prepare garlic for cooking. Remove the skin by first placing the bulb on a cutting board or hard surface. Then gently, but firmly, apply pressure with the palm of your hand at about a 20 – 30 angle. This will cause the layers of skin that hold the bulb together to separate. Garlic cloves are best either chopped or crushed and then allowed to sit for 10 – 15 minutes to allow for the activation of the allicin in the garlic. You can use a garlic crusher or the side of a large knife to crush the garlic.

- Always buy fresh garlic to use in food.
- Garlic added to food can relieve nasal congestion when taken daily.^[3]

2 Cook the garlic over low heat. To maximize garlic's effects, use it as close to raw as possible. If nearly raw garlic is "too much" for you, add the garlic near the end of the meal's cooking time. Don't overcook the garlic, because it loses some of its potency with high and prolonged heat. Add it to sauces, rub it over meats and poultry, or add it to vegetables, mixing it in well.

- Garlic can be added to taste to just about any meal. In food, it is safe for children and pregnant or nursing women.^[4]
- Avoid high-temperature stir frying of garlic.^[5]
- Don't use a microwave when cooking with garlic. This reduces the allicin produced.^[6]
- For a quick meal sauté garlic with vegetables. For example, sauté some fresh spinach and add the crushed garlic when the spinach is nearly done. Remove from heat and sprinkle lemon juice over the spinach-garlic mixture.
- You can add a variety of leafy greens in addition to spinach.

3 Consider adding raw, completely crushed garlic to foods after cooking. An easy and delicious dish to make with raw garlic is hummus. Puree together cooked garbanzo beans, tahini (sesame butter), olive oil, lemon juice, and crushed garlic to make your own hummus dip.

- Garlic can be added to a wide variety of foods. Add the crushed garlic to mashed potatoes and simply stir it in.
- Add crushed garlic to the top of any meat about five to 10 minutes before the meat is removed from the heat. Heat makes the garlic more mild.

Method
2

Making Garlic Tea

1 Make garlic tea with honey. Making garlic tea is a simple way to use garlic medicinally. Place three whole, peeled cloves of garlic into a saucepan with 3 cups (710 mL) of water. Bring to a boil and then turn off the heat.^{[7][8]}

- Add ½ cup (118 mL) honey and ½ cup (118 mL) freshly squeezed lemon juice.
- Mix, drink half, and refrigerate the extra tea.
- Sip the tea three times a day.

2 Make garlic tea with ginger and lemon. Garlic tea is widely used in Mexico and Spain to treat colds and coughs. If you have a cold or upper respiratory infection, drink the tea four times a day for seven days. Place five peeled and crushed cloves of garlic into a saucepan with 4 cups (1 quart about 1 liter) of water. Bring to a boil and then turn off the heat.

- Add the juice of one freshly squeezed lemon and 1 teaspoon of raw grated ginger.
- Place back on the heat and simmer at low heat for 20 minutes, then strain the mixture.
- Refrigerate the extra tea. When you want more, warm up ½ cup (118 mL) at a time and sip it four times a day.

3 Make garlic and saffron tea. Saffron is used in traditional Persian/Iranian medicine to treat depression and lift the mood.^[9] Place three whole, peeled cloves of garlic into a saucepan with 3 cups (710 mL) of water. Bring to a boil and then turn off the heat.

- Add 1 teaspoon of saffron. Saffron has to be hand-picked so it can be expensive. Fresh saffron is best but choose the dried saffron over the powdered saffron.
- Saffron can cause uterine contractions, so pregnant women should not use saffron except under the advisement of a physician.^[10]
- Add ½ cup (118 mL) honey then mix and refrigerate extra tea.
- To drink the extra tea, warm up ½ cup (118 mL) at a time and sip it three times a day.

Method
3

Taking Garlic in Other Ways

- 1 Take dried garlic as a supplement.** No standards have been developed for children, but to treat a type of high blood lipid disorder, 300 mg of dehydrated garlic powder three times a day was safely taken by children.
 - 2 – 7 gm of aged garlic extracts should be taken daily in divided doses. An example of this is the product Kyolic. Aged garlic contains some allicin (the “active” component of garlic), but not as much as other products. This is why you need to take much more of it.
 - Dried garlic powder, such as Kwai and Garlicin, has not been well-standardized and does not contain a great deal of allicin, though some may be produced after digestion. Most of the clinical studies have been done using Kwai with dosages ranging from 600 – 1,200 mg daily in divided doses.
 - Allicin powdered extract, such as Allisure, Allimax, Alliforce and Alli-C, are powdered extracts that contain significant amounts of allicin in a standardized form. Because of this standardization and the higher amounts of allicin in these products, you don’t have to take much to get the benefits. Take 6 – 10 mg daily.
 - 6 – 900 mg of garlic tablets or capsules should be taken daily in divided doses. These are generally the best choice for most people, as they provide a standardized or known amount of the active ingredient (allicin).
- 2 Take a garlic tincture.** 2 – 4 ml of tincture (extracts in alcohol) should be taken daily. Tinctures will only contain a small amount of allicin but can be a good alternative for those that don’t like garlic in their food.
 - Do not use tinctures if you are in recovery from alcoholism. Tinctures use 95% alcohol to extract herbs.
 - Garlic oil does not contain allicin because of the processing necessary to produce the oil
 - Some products may indicate on the label an “Allicin potential” or “Allicin yield.” This is an attempt to standardize, but studies have indicated that this value is not exact or stable.
- 3 Add garlic to preparations to ease coughs and sore throats.** Raw garlic can be added to a number of homemade remedies to reduce the severity of throat infections and coughs. For example, make a throat gargle by pouring 1 cup (237 mL) of boiled water over two chopped garlic cloves. Allow to steep for three hours, then strain and gargle.^[11]
 - For a cough, peel and crush two garlic bulbs and leave exposed for 15 minutes (this allows allicin to form). Crush in a mortar and pestle after the quarter hour has passed and stir into a small pot of runny honey. Allow to

infuse overnight. One teaspoon of this mixture can be taken for coughs, colds, and sore throats when needed.^[12] Be sure to label the honey for clarity of contents and purpose.

4 Talk to a qualified healthcare professional before beginning any supplementation. Garlic can interact with a number of prescription medications including blood pressure medicines (these include nifedipine (Adalat, Procardia), verapamil (Calan, Isoptin, Verelan), diltiazem (Cardizem), isradipine (DynaCirc), felodipine (Plendil), amlodipine (Norvasc), and others); oral contraceptives; anticoagulants (blood thinners) like warfarin (coumadin); various other medications. Talk to your physician about the medications you take and if garlic could interfere with these. Since garlic can increase bleeding, it should be discontinued one to two weeks before surgery.

Tips

- Increased dietary and supplemental use of garlic has been associated with lower risk of colon and stomach cancer and lower blood pressure.^{[13][14][15]}
- Garlic has also been shown in a number of studies to reduce cholesterol and serum lipids and decreases blood clotting, possibly reducing the risk of heart disease.^{[16][17][18]}

Warnings

- Allergy in some persons: rarely may develop, after frequent contact with garlic, an inflammatory condition of the skin (eczema) or other allergic reactions.
- Speak with your doctor about possible interactions with medications such as blood-thinners, protease inhibitors and anti-platelet medications.^[19]
- Do **not** use garlic in significant amounts (or avoid it entirely):
 - If you have inflammation of the stomach (gastroenteritis) or an ulcer.
 - If you are pregnant, garlic may stimulate uterine contractions (pain) and secretions (Farnsworth, et al 1975).
 - If nursing, avoid garlic.

Sources and Citations

1. You WC, Brown LM, Zhang L, et al. Randomized double-blind factorial trial of three treatments to reduce the prevalence of precancerous gastric lesions. *J Natl Cancer Inst* 2006;98:974-83.
2. Anim-Nyame, N., Sooranna, S. R., Johnson, M. R., Gamble, J., and Steer, P. J. Garlic supplementation increases peripheral blood flow: a role for interleukin-6? *J Nutr.Biochem.* 2004;15(1):30-36.
3. Reader's Digest, Allergic Rhinitis, in *Curing everyday ailments the natural way*, p. 82, (2000), ISBN1-876689-78-1

[Show more... \(16\)](#)