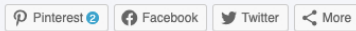


HEALTHY EATING

# Make This One Simple Tweak To Transform Everything You Cook Into a Healthy Meal

And good news, you probably have the tools in your kitchen already.

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Cooking is one of the best ways to keep your health in check and practice some creativity at home. And while it may be tempting to season your pasta, grains, meat, or [vegetables](#) with those seemingly handy store-bought sauces, the truth is that many of those bottled and jarred condiments are loaded with added sugar, excess sodium, and artificial ingredients. What looks like a short-cut is often a nutrition-zapper that can seriously hinder your health goals. The good news is that one of our favorite healthy eating tips is a super simple [swap](#) that we're letting you in on — hint, it's all about the herbs and spices, and plenty of them!

## This Healthy Eating Tip May Transform Your Favorite Recipes Into Even Healthier Dishes

A quick scan of your spice rack and pantry and you'll find ingredients that have some pretty impressive research-backed benefits. Plus, some herbs and spices that [add some amazing flavor to just about anything you eat](#).

And unlike baking, which calls for precise measurements, with savory cooking you can play around with proportions, finding your ideal ratio on the spice spectrum.

Here's our guide to nine essential spices and herbs to add to your cooking routine.

## Keep These 9 Health & Flavor-Boosting Herbs & Spices Stocked in Your Pantry





## #1 Turmeric

Turmeric has been one of the most buzzed-about spices for what seems like forever, but the truth is that this radiant yellow spice dates back **4,000 years** with roots in India. Even today, the South Asian country produces almost all of the world's supply of **turmeric**, but its popularity has reached global status, with chefs and home cooks incorporating the spice into rice dishes, vegetable platters, and even in lattes.

In Ayurvedic medicine, the spice is commonly used to help support digestion, but Western medicine has caught on and researchers have verified that curcumin — the active ingredient in turmeric — comes with some impressive anti-inflammatory properties and has even been shown to up your **basal metabolic rate** — the higher that rate, the more energy you expend, and the more calories you can burn, so your waistline can thank you, too.

**Pro Tip:** It's important to note that pairing your turmeric with black pepper and/or a fat like avocado or olive oil can boost its bioavailability, making it easier for your body to absorb its golden goodness.

**Try it in: Golden milk lattes, stir-fry, roasted veggies**

## #2 Cinnamon

Nothing says "fall" like this aromatic spice, but it's not just useful for getting in the mood for sweater weather. Sourced from certain tree barks, cinnamon gets its powerhouse properties from the antimicrobial compound **cinnamaldehyde**. This **powerful essential oil** has been shown to help ward off free radicals, and support cardiovascular health.

**Try it in: Coffee, smoothies**

## #3 Cayenne

Some like it hot — and that's where cayenne comes in. Capsaicin, the all-star compound found in chili peppers and the element that gives it that characteristic heat, has been shown to **increase metabolism** and curb appetite.

A **2010 study** found that people who had a 1 gram serving of cayenne pepper had fewer cravings, especially for fatty, salty, and sweet foods. That effect is even stronger in cayenne newbies whose bodies aren't as used to the spice.

**Try it in: Fajitas, baked sweet potato fries, soups**

## #4 Garlic

It's related to onions, leeks, shallots, and chives, but garlic is a pungent, distinctive bulb all its own. Like most spices, it's ideal to use fresh garlic versus powdered because when sliced, minced, or crushed, the alliinase enzyme gets activated and creates allicin. It's that particular element that gives garlic its health-supporting benefits. One **study** found that people who ate garlic were sicker fewer days than those who didn't.

**Try it in: Pastas and garlic bread**

## #5 Ginger

There's a reason your parents always handed you a ginger ale or whipped up ginger tea if you had a stomach ache.

The aromatic spice — one of the most widely consumed in the world — has been proven over and over again to **provide digestive support**.

The spice comes in many forms — fresh, dried, candied, crystallized, etc. — and **research** shows that the powdered form contains the most gingerols, the main component of ginger.

**Try it in: Tea, smoothies, stir-fry**

## #6 Peppermint

It's not just useful for mojitos and breath fresheners. **Peppermint** is an all-around herb all-star. Like ginger, it's also been shown to ease stomach discomfort and comes with a cooling aftertaste that adds a delicious flavor to things like homemade peppermint "nice cream".

**Try it in: Tea, salads, Avocado Mint Cacao Smoothie**

## #7 Rosemary

This herb adds an extra dose of deliciousness to foods like roasted potatoes and pizza, and even better, **rosemary** has been shown to come with some memory and mood-boosting properties.

**Try it on: Roasted veggies, omelets, creamy pastas**

## #8 Oregano

Ever heard of taking a spoonful of oregano oil at the onset of sickness? There's science behind that. The herb is packed with [antioxidants](#) to fight harmful free radicals and has been shown to [fight bacteria](#) — 23 types of bacteria to be exact.

Fun fact: Oregano dates back to the [Greek and Roman empires](#). The ancient cultures associated the herb with joy and happiness.

**Try it in:** [Pizza](#), [salads](#), [soups](#)

## #9 Cumin

This nutty, earthy spice was one of the first cultivated herbs in [Asia, Africa, and Europe](#), and for good reason. It plays a big role in supporting better digestion, and studies have shown that it may help improve [weight and body mass index](#).

Like most ground herbs, keep in mind that the powdered version will be more concentrated so you'll need less than if you use fresh cumin seeds.

**Try it in:** [Veggie burgers](#), [turkey chili](#), [tacos](#)

# The Best Herbs and Spices for Healthy Eating

Once you switch to seasoning your dishes with health-boosting herbs and spices, you'll taste the difference. Expect richer, more flavorful, nuanced meals. Play around with ratios and combinations — once you find your ideal spice scenario, keep your favorites stocked in your [pantry](#) or try your hand at growing them in a container garden.

The beauty of spices and herbs is that they can kick up even the most minimalist of meals. And during busy weekdays, that's just what we need to hear.

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