

KEYS TO BETTER HEALTH™

“Seasonings” Greetings

Dried herbs and spices are a convenient way to add flavor to a meal or dessert. This time of year, you might be digging through your spice cabinet, looking for things like “allspice” and “nutmeg.” You may not have used them since last year’s holiday season, and find yourself wondering if they’ve lost their flavor. Take away the guesswork this holiday season, and get creative and enjoy some new flavors. Spice up your cooking with the following tips and tricks for common spice storage and use.

Caring for herbs and spices

For optimum flavor, spices should be kept in tightly sealed containers in cool, dry spaces. Most ground spices are safe and flavorful for about a year. Whole spices last slightly longer, for about two years. Although your spices may be safe to use after that point, they may lose some of their flavor. Dried herbs last about a year, but fresh herbs last just a few days, so if you are using fresh, make sure you will be ready to use them shortly after purchasing¹.



Health Benefits

Salt is a favorite to add flavor when cooking. Salt has been linked to elevated blood pressure. In fact, the American Heart Association recommends no more than 2300mg of sodium, or about one teaspoon of salt, per day for adults². Since herbs and spices add flavor and zest to your meal, using them can make it easier to limit salt. Spicing up your dish can make each portion more satisfying while keeping your calorie intake in check.

Herb and Spice Uses

- Pep up your Christmas Eve beef stew, apple pie, and gingerbread with allspice.
- Basil adds depth and flavor to many dishes, and is especially good in pasta sauce.
- Use cloves to make a delicious homemade cider. Allow your cider and cloves to simmer in a slow cooker to intensify the flavor.
- Try cinnamon on top of Sunday morning pancakes, or sprinkle a dab on top of your hot cocoa or latte.
- Be sure to have nutmeg on hand for eggnog and pumpkin pies.
- Strong, pungent rosemary is delicious on beef and pork. Long stalks of rosemary can even be used as skewer sticks for kebabs.
- Relax and top off your day or holiday meal with a soothing cup of peppermint tea.

Keys to Better Health™ offers a nutrition shelf-edge labeling program, which makes it easy for you to quickly identify healthy choices regardless of what diet you follow. When you’re in our store, be on the lookout for our nutrition tags

Sources:

1. Common Herbs and Spices: How to Use Them Deliciously. American Heart Association website. <https://recipes.heart.org/Articles/1040/Common-Herbs-and-Spices-How-to-Use-Them-Deliciously>. Accessed September 13, 2017
2. How Much Sodium Should I Eat Per Day? American Heart Association Website. https://sodiumbreakup.heart.org/how_much_sodium_should_i_eat. Accessed September 13, 2017

