

Garlic

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For thousands of years people all around the world have celebrated garlic with feasting, festivals and celebration. There is a lot of folklore surrounding these little bulbs; one in particular (which may be helpful this month) is repelling vampires.



Folklore aside, many studies have been done on the health benefits of garlic. It has been used in many cultures as a natural antibiotic. I knew a family who spent a year in

Russia. They shared with me how the people there used garlic to keep from getting sick. If they heard someone cough or sneeze someone would get after them for not taking enough garlic. This family was a little scared of that happening to them so they came up with creative ways to include it in their diet. One they told me about was to slice it thin and put it on a piece of bread with some butter.

One of the side effects of using prescription antibiotics is that it destroys the beneficial bacteria in the gut. Studies have shown that using garlic not only kills the bad bacteria in the intestines, but it also increases the beneficial bacteria. This is awesome because it can be used for many viruses and bacteria that are becoming antibiotic resistant, and it leaves you with a healthy digestive tract.

With the number one killer in America being heart disease, let's look at what garlic can do for the blood, heart and arteries. I picked up a small book years ago called "[The Miracle of Garlic and Vinegar](#)" by James Edmond O'Brien. The book is full of scientific studies done on garlic. It states that garlic prevents heart attacks and strokes by controlling the key variables of high cholesterol, high triglycerides, high blood pressure and atherosclerosis – the deadly process of plaque formation and fat deposits inside the arteries. These factors create blockages in the circulatory system that ultimately can choke blood flow to the heart muscle or brain. It was found that garlic thins the blood by dissolving fat particles and out of place blood clots and keeps them in suspension until they can be eliminated through the bowel – as long as it's circulating and your body is excreting it, it can't hurt you. Scientists recommended using one to three cloves daily, adding it to soups or salads.

Garlic possesses a stunning array of medicinal properties. It acts as an antiseptic and fights infection. It contains chemicals that prevent cancer. It thins the blood, reducing clotting in high-risk heart patients. It lowers blood pressure, reduces cholesterol and controls triglycerides. It stimulates the immune system. It prevents and relieves chronic bronchitis and acts as a decongestant and expectorant. Someone having surgery may not want to use garlic beforehand because of the blood thinning properties. Other than that, there have been no side effects reported by using garlic regularly. Perhaps some bad breath but to offset it Dr. Christopher recommended putting a clove (not a garlic clove, the spice clove) in the mouth and keeping it there. Eating fresh parsley after ingesting fresh garlic is also helpful.

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