

## THYME

### "The Herb of Love"

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1. Thyme is an indigenous Mediterranean herb known for its nutraceutical (health benefits beyond nutritive value) function.
2. It was used to treat malaria in the 16th century.
3. Considering the antiseptic, antiviral and anti-inflammatory properties, broader usage of thyme is being studied <sup>1</sup>.

### What is in thyme?

The active ingredient in thyme is **thymol**, which gives the aromatic flavor and its nutraceutical properties <sup>2</sup>.

### What do studies say about the health benefits?

**Oral health:** Using thyme as an oral rinse proved to be efficient in reducing dry mouth, sores in elderly patients with end-stage renal disease (ESRD). Increased saliva production prevented dry mouth after one month of using thyme honey oral rinse without known negative side effects.

Thyme and honey are promising alternatives to the currently used medications for treating dry mouth <sup>3,4</sup> \*\*\*.

**Mental health:** Studies indicate that incorporating thyme leaves



into traditional food in safe amounts could improve memory and recall, reduce anxiety and depression symptoms, and improve sleep quality <sup>5\*\*</sup>. Traditionally, it is associated with courage and affection <sup>1\*\*</sup>.

#### Strength of evidence

\*\*\* Strong \*\* Moderate \* Basic

**Remedy for painful ulcers:** Thyme and its oils contain vitamins A and C that maintain a healthy epithelium. In the digestive system, it activates enzymes that aid digestion. Carvacrol, thyme oil, when administered to rats prevented gastric lesions <sup>6\*\*\*</sup>. These beneficial effects and prevention of ulcers also have been documented in humans <sup>7\*\*</sup>.

**Cardiac health:** Thyme-infused green coffee when consumed for 90 days has shown to have lipid-lowering effects and has a preventive role in heart diseases, by acting on the lipid profile and blood sugar in humans. Thymol and chlorogenic acid were the constituents that contributed to these effects <sup>8\*\*</sup>. Research is ongoing to further support this.

# Functional Foods

## How is thyme traditionally used?

Traditionally Thyme was known to protect our vital organs

- Heart
- Liver
- Kidney and
- Brain <sup>1</sup>

## How much Thyme is safe to consume?

- Culinary dosages (a few pinches) to 4-6 grams per day (1 tsp) are safe.
- Excessive doses in animal experiments were found to be toxic. <sup>8</sup>
- Usage of supplements or concentrated extracts should be under your doctor's guidance.
- Functional foods, including thyme, are not meant to substitute for a healthy diet, nor should they be used to replace prescribed medication.
- Effects may vary from person to person.

## How to use thyme?



Thyme can be used fresh or dried, and the leaves are typically stripped from stems for use in cooking. Dried thyme has a more concentrated flavor than fresh thyme, making it suitable for longer cooking.

Thyme can be used in salad dressings, sauces and marinades to impart special flavor. Thyme is used to season a variety of

dishes, including meats, poultry, seafood, vegetables, soups, stews and pasta sauces.

## Resources

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