

NUTMEG

‘The Wonder Spice’

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1. Nutmeg comes from the seeds of the *Myristica fragrans*, a tree native to Indonesia.
2. Nutmeg can be found in its whole seed form, as an essential oil, or in its most popular form, as a ground spice¹.

What is in nutmeg?

Nutmeg leaves and seeds contain essential oils that give them their smell and health benefits. They provide **anti-inflammatory** effects²⁻⁴, which means they protect our body cells, reduce the risk of cancer, and lower inflammation.

Essential oils in nutmeg

Mono-terpenes are plant-derived organic compounds that impart a characteristic smell and flavor.

Phenylpropanoids are also plant-derived compounds that have anti-inflammatory properties.



What do studies say about the health benefits?

Gum health: A study tested nutmeg gel on people with gum disease. When used regularly, it helps reduce swelling and pain, plaque formation, and prevents bad breath. The effects were like oral medicines. It also prevented bad oral breath.^{5 **}

Heart health and diabetes: Most of the benefits related to heart health and maintenance of normal blood sugar are from animal experiments.^{6**} Further research is underway in humans.

Infections: The extracts are known for their antibacterial properties. This helps to prevent infections^{7**}.

Research is ongoing to further support this evidence.

Strength of evidence

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

Functional Foods

How much Nutmeg is safe to consume?

- Culinary dosages (a few pinches) are safe.
- Excessive doses in animal experiments were found to be toxic.⁸
- Usage of supplements or concentrated extracts should be under your doctor's guidance.
- Functional foods, including Nutmeg, 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 nutmeg?

A few pinches of nutmeg powder can be added to flavor any of the following commonly consumed food preparations:

- Oat or whole wheat pancakes
- Roasted vegetables
- Soups

Resources

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