

# CARDAMOM

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## ABSTRACT

Cardamom is a strong antioxidant plant, so it is called the queen of spices. *Elettaria cardamomum*, a highly priced spice, is native to the Western Ghats of South India. Wild populations still occur in isolated patches in their natural habitats; however, much of today's commercial product comes from cultivated sources. Cardamom is a seed pod mostly known for its culinary and medicinal properties. It is grown in India, Sri Lanka, Tanzania, and Guatemala. Each green pod on the plant contains about 15 to 20 seeds. Their seeds have a unique taste and smell.



## INTRODUCTION

Common Name: Cardamom

Botanical Name: *Elettaria cardamomum*

Cardamom is a spice with an intense, slightly sweet flavor that some people compare to mint. It originated in India but is available worldwide today and used in both sweet and savory recipes. The seeds, oils and extracts of cardamom are thought to have impressive medicinal properties and have been used in traditional medicine for centuries.



- and expel water collected around important organs by promoting frequent urination.
- Cardamom kills the unhealthy bacteria present on the palate and tongue, thus fighting bad breath.
- Cardamom and its essential oils combined with ginger, lemon and lavender help to clear your head, beat nausea and feel relaxed while you are awake.
- Asthma and wheezing can be reduced by using Cardamom in addition to regular medicine. It helps to clear the nasal passage and chest of phlegm to promote easier breathing. It also improves your oxygen intake by helping your lungs to relax in order to breathe long and deep.
- Cardamom has meat protection properties as it acts as a natural preservative.
- Cardamom has analgesic properties so it eases joint and muscle pains and inflamed nerves.
- It works as an antidote to scorpion and snake bites.

## CARDAMOM CROP CULTIVATION

Production of green cardamom has fallen from 25,000 tonnes to 10,000 to 12,000 tonnes in the past few years. The average price of cardamom reached Rs 4,000 this season and it presently commands a price of Rs 2,900 to Rs 3,000 per kg.

## HEALTH BENEFITS OF CARDAMOM

- The therapeutic properties of cardamom oil have been found application in many traditional medicines as antiseptic, antispasmodic, carminative, digestive, diuretic, expectorant, stimulant, stomachic and tonic.
- Cardamom is a good source of minerals like potassium, calcium, and magnesium. 100 g pods contain 1119 mg of this electrolyte. Potassium is an important component of cell and body fluids that helps control heart rate and blood pressure. The human body uses copper for the production of red blood cells.
- This exotic spice contains many plants derived chemical compounds that are known to have been anti-oxidant, disease preventing and health promoting properties.
- Cardamom is known to regulate high blood pressure with daily intake due to its diuretic effect. Rich in antioxidants, it helps detoxify the blood



## HARVESTING AND CULTIVATION PROCESS

Cardamom plants normally start bearing two years after planting. In most of the areas the peak period of harvest is during October-November. Picking is carried out at an interval of 15-25 days. Ripe capsules are harvested in order to get maximum green colour during curing. After harvest, capsules are dried either in fuel kiln or electrical drier or in the sun. It has been found that soaking the freshly harvested green cardamom capsules in 2% washing soda solution for 10 minutes prior to drying helps to retain the green colour during drying. When drier is used, it should be dried at 45-50° C for 14-18 hours, while for kiln, over night drying at 50-60° C is required. The capsules kept for drying are spread thinly and stirred frequently to ensure uniform drying. The dried capsules are rubbed with hands or coir mat or wire mesh and winnowed to remove any foreign matter. They are then sorted out according to size and colour, and stored in black polythene lined gunny bags to retain the green colour during storage.



## MEDICINAL USE

The therapeutic properties of cardamom oil have found application in many traditional medicines as an antiseptic and local anesthetic, and antioxidant, besides playing health promoting and disease preventing roles.

## NUTRITIONAL VALUE OF CARDAMOM

- 100 grams of cardamom contains:
- Protein: 11 g
- Cholesterol: 0 mg
- Carbs: 68 g
- Total Fat: 7 g
- Calorific Value: 311 kcal

## SOME NATURAL REMEDIES WITH CARDAMOM

- To relieve hiccups, make an infusion by boiling 5 mint leaves and 2 pounded cardamom pods in a cup of water and drink.
- To treat gonorrhoea, cystitis, nephritis and burning sensation while passing urine add some powdered cardamom seeds to 1 tsp banana leaf powder and 1 tsp amla juice and take 3 times a day.
- For instant relief in headache apply cardamom paste on the forehead.
- For aphrodisiac benefits, add a pinch of cardamom seeds to a glass of milk. Add a tsp of honey and drink daily.
- For protection against heat stroke, chew a cardamom pod before going out in the sun.
- In stomach-ache, crush 2 cardamoms and mix in a tsp honey and consume.
- In kidney failure grind cardamom and mix in milk and drink. It brings on urine and also stops burning sensation on urination.
- For blood in bile, on an empty stomach chew and eat 2 cardamom pods every day and then drink milk after this. It benefits.

## CONCLUSION

Although many of its health benefits need further study, cardamom is safe for most people to take in moderate amounts. Cardamom's natural photochemical have antioxidant and anti-inflammatory abilities that could improve health. However, it is too early to say whether this spice can treat any health conditions.



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