

Cayenne Pepper Benefits Your Gut, Heart & Benefits



Many of us have used cayenne pepper to add a little spice to our meals, but did you know that it has the power to change your health? It has been used for both food and medicine for the last 9,000 years! Cayenne pepper can stimulate your body's circulation and reduce acidity; it's a powerful, spicy little pepper that offers many health benefits.

Cayenne pepper is typically added to food in either its natural or powdered form, and some people use it as a cream or capsule in order to take advantage of its detoxifying properties.

Cayenne pepper benefits are numerous and effective; it's used to help digestion, including heal upset stomach, slow intestinal gas, stop stomach pain, stop diarrhea and as a natural remedy for cramps. It's also used for conditions of the heart and blood vessels — including to improve poor circulation, reverse excessive blood clotting, **lower high cholesterol** and prevent heart disease.

When consumed, cayenne pepper has the power to relieve a toothache, seasickness, alcoholism, malaria and fever; it's also used to help people who have difficulty swallowing. When applied topically, cayenne pepper benefits the skin, too.

The fruit of the capsicum plant contains a chemical called **capsaicin**. Using capsaicin for different health ailments is more common than ever. Currently, it's being studied to test its ability to reduce pain sensations when applied to the skin, and research indicates that it would be

effective as a [remedy for headaches](#) (including migraines), potential solution for osteoarthritis and other painful conditions.

Cayenne Pepper Nutrition Facts

Cayenne is a shrub that originated in Central and South America and now grows in subtropical and tropical climates. Its hollow fruit grows into long pods that turn red, orange or yellow when they ripen. Cayenne chili peppers (or *Capsicum frutescens*) belong to the genus *Capsicum* and come from a similar cultivar of *Capsicum annuum*. Capsicum is an herb, and the fruit of the capsicum plant is used to make medicine.

The pepper also contains [vitamin C](#), vitamin B6, [vitamin E](#), potassium, manganese and flavonoids – which provides its powerful [antioxidant](#) properties. On the Scoville Rating Scale, cayenne pepper is rated typically anywhere from 30,000 to 190,000 Scoville Heat Units (SHU). (Pure capsaicin has the highest SHU rating.)

Here are the cayenne pepper nutrition facts, listed in recommended daily values; **1 teaspoon** of cayenne pepper contains:

- 17 calories
- 1 gram of fat
- 2 milligrams sodium
- 3 grams carbohydrate
- 1 gram dietary fiber
- 1 gram sugar
- 1 gram protein
- 44 percent vitamin A
- 8 percent vitamin E
- 7 percent vitamin C
- 6 percent vitamin B6
- 5 percent vitamin K
- 5 percent manganese
- 3 percent potassium
- No cholesterol

CAYENNE PEPPER

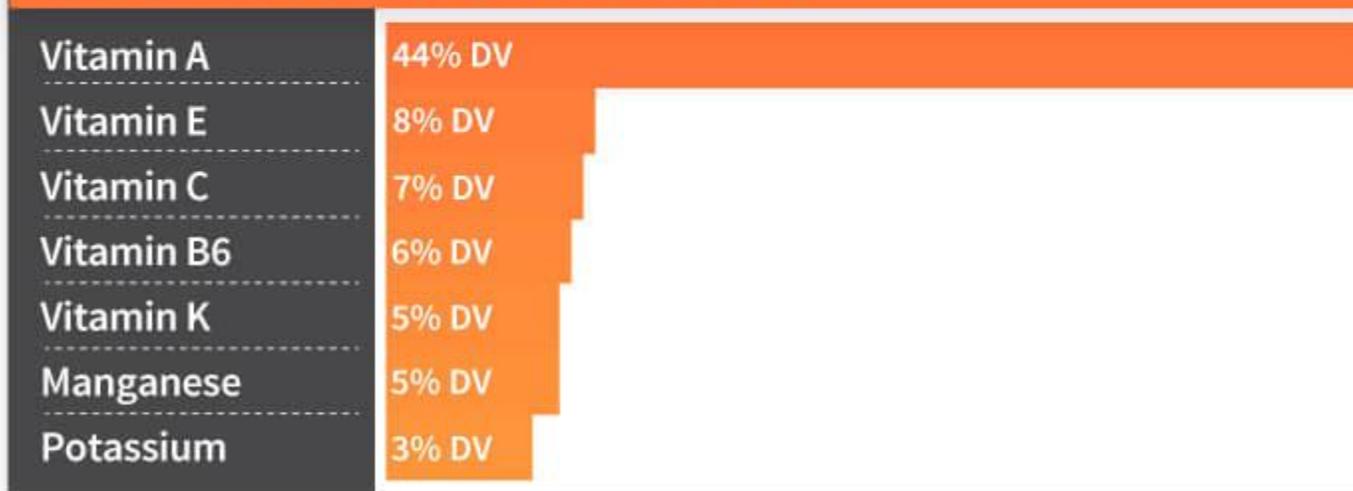
Nutrition Facts

Dr. Axe
FOOD IS MEDICINE

1 teaspoon of cayenne pepper contains:

CALORIES	17 k cal	PROTEIN	1 g	CARBOHYDRATES	3 g
SODIUM	2 mg	SUGARS	1 g	DIETARY FIBER	1 g
FAT	1 g	CHOLESTEROL	0 g		

DAILY VALUE PERCENTAGES*



* recommended DV (Daily Value)

15 Cayenne Pepper Benefits

1. Helps Digestion

One of the major cayenne pepper benefits is the positive effect it has on the digestive system. Cayenne pepper helps produce saliva, which is important for excellent digestion as well

as preventing bad breath. Consuming cayenne pepper stimulates our salivary glands, which is needed to begin the digestive process.

Cayenne pepper also stimulates the flow of enzyme production, which is essential for our [digestive system to work](#) properly. It also stimulates gastric juices that aid the body's ability to metabolize food and toxins.

2. Relieves Migraine Pain

Researchers suggest that cayenne pepper, due to its spice, is able to stimulate a pain response in a different part of the body. Once this happens, the brain puts its attention on that new site and will no longer concentrate on the pain in the head, which causes the [migraine headache](#).

After this initial pain reaction from the cayenne pepper, the nerve fibers have a depleted substance P, or pain chemical, and the sensation of pain is lessened. You are basically tricking your body to "feel pain" somewhere else, so that the head is no longer the main focus for pain chemicals.

3. Prevents Blood Clots

Blood clots are blockages in your arteries and blood vessels that limit blood flow through your circulatory system. Cayenne encourages fibrinolytic activity and helps [prevent blood clots](#). This is also the reason why cayenne pepper is effective in preventing heart attacks. The capsaicin in cayenne pepper helps to clear away artery-narrowing lipid deposits, and dilates arteries and blood vessels to clear away clots.

4. Provides Detox Support

Cayenne pepper benefits include its ability to stimulate circulation and eliminate acidity. Cayenne pepper restores the circulatory system by opening the capillaries and regulating blood sugar; it also helps the digestive system that moves bacteria and toxins out of the body. Cayenne pepper also increases body temperature and [boosts your metabolism](#).

5. Relieves Joint and Nerve Pain

Cayenne power has very powerful pain-relieving properties when applied to the skin. It reduces the amount of substance P, a chemical that carries pain messages to the brain. When there is less substance P, the pain messages no longer reach the brain and you feel relief.

Studies have found that cayenne pepper relieves pain after surgery, such as a mastectomy or an amputation. It also alleviates pain from nerve damage in the feet or legs from diabetes, lower back injuries, neuropathy, osteoarthritis and rheumatoid arthritis, as well as [fibromyalgia symptoms](#) like joint or muscle pain.

6. Supports Weight Loss

Studies have found that consuming cayenne pepper for breakfast creates less appetite, so people eat less calories during the day. It also burns excess fat because it's a metabolic booster. As one of the key [anti-inflammatory foods](#), cayenne pepper benefits also include weight loss. Cayenne pepper has the power to soothe inflammation and bloating that comes from allergies, food sensitivities and infections.

7. Works as Anti-Irritant

Cayenne pepper benefits include its anti-irritant properties, making it effective in easing ulcers, upset stomachs, cough and even potentially [stop diarrhea](#). The common belief is that cayenne pepper, when consumed in excessive amounts, leads to gastric ulcers because of its irritant and acid-secreting nature. People with ulcers are actually advised to limit or avoid using cayenne pepper; however, investigations carried out in recent years have revealed that chili, or its active principle "capsaicin," is not the cause for the formation of [ulcer symptoms](#) but a benefactor.

Studies have found that cayenne pepper does not stimulate, but inhibits acid secretion, stimulates alkali and mucus secretions and particularly gastric mucosal blood flow, which helps in the prevention and healing of ulcers.

8. Treats Psoriasis

[Psoriasis](#) occurs when skin cells replicate too quickly, and it results in swollen patches under the skin covered with whitish scales on top. The scaly patches are areas of inflammation and excessive skin production.

Two trials showed that 0.025 percent capsaicin (cayenne pepper) cream used topically is effective in treating psoriasis. The first study showed a significant decrease in scaling and redness during a six-week period in 44 patients with moderate and severe psoriasis. The second was a double-blind study of 197 patients; psoriasis was treated with the capsaicin cream four times daily for six weeks, with a significant decrease in scaling, thickness, redness and itching.

9. Boosts Metabolism

Cayenne pepper benefits also include its ability to regulate your metabolism. Cayenne pepper has been found to effectively suppress hunger and [normalize glucose levels](#). It keeps blood pressure levels normalized, and helps the body lower LDL cholesterol and triglycerides.

10. Fights Cold and Flu

Cayenne pepper benefits include being full of beta carotene and antioxidants that support your immune system. It aids in breaking up and moving congested mucus, and once this nasty mucus leaves the body, the symptoms of the flu or cold will diminish. Besides helping as a [natural remedy for the flu](#), cayenne pepper also raises your body temperature, which makes you sweat

and increases the activity of your immune system. As a [vitamin C food](#), cayenne pepper may also help you to kick that nasty cold.

11. Source of Vitamin A

[Vitamin A](#) plays a critical role in maintaining healthy vision, neurological function and healthy skin; it is an antioxidant that reduces inflammation by [fighting free radicals](#). Studies have repeatedly shown that antioxidants like vitamin A are vital to good health and longevity; they benefit eye health, boost immunity and foster cell growth.

Lucky for us, cayenne pepper is a great source of vitamin A; in fact, with just two teaspoons of cayenne pepper, you are getting your fill of vitamin A for the day!

12. Contains Vitamin E

[Vitamin E benefits](#) include helping many organs in the body function properly and is extremely useful in naturally slowing the aging process. This important and beneficial vitamin has the power to balance cholesterol, fight free radicals, repair damaged skin, balance hormones, repair damaged skin and hair, improve vision and increase energy levels ... and cayenne pepper is an important provider of vitamin E.

13. Prevents Allergies

Because cayenne is an anti-inflammatory agent, it has the power to prevent allergies and the symptoms related to allergies. A food allergy, for example, is a measurable response to consuming a specific food. [Food allergies](#), or intolerances, can be caused by a condition known as [leaky gut](#) (intestinal permeability), when proteins and food particles pass through the gut and cause systemic body inflammation.

Leaky gut is like having the gates broken from your intestines to your bloodstream so that toxins, microbes and undigested food particles can now get through. (Take my [leaky gut test](#) if you want to know if you have it.) When this happens, it causes inflammation throughout your body, leading to a variety of diseases.

14. Possible Anti-Cancer Agent

Studies suggest that capsaicin may have a role as a [natural remedy for cancer](#), including in the management of prostate cancer. One study conducted at University of California at Los Angeles School of Medicine found that this important ingredient in cayenne pepper is able to inhibit the growth of cancer cells and prevent the activation of new dangerous formations.

There is also data from California's Loma Linda University that suggests that cayenne pepper benefits include being effective in helping prevent lung cancer in smokers. Cayenne pepper's high amounts of capsaicin serves as a substance that can stop the formation of tobacco induced tumors in the lung. Similar effects have also been found in liver tumors when they were exposed to cayenne pepper.

15. Anti-Fungal Properties

The final cayenne pepper benefit is its ability to kill fungus and prevent the formation of fungal pathogens. Cayenne pepper was investigated to determine its in vitro antifungal activity, and the results found that it was active against 16 different fungal strains, including *Candida*.

Candida is a fungus that aids with nutrient absorption and digestion, when in proper levels in the body. When it overproduces, however, the typical [candida symptoms](#) may appear; this includes hormone imbalance, joint pain, digestive problems and a weak immune system.

History & Interesting Facts About Cayenne Pepper

The chili originated in Central and South America. It's named after the capital city of the French Guiana, *Cayenne*. From seeds found on the floors of caves that were ancient human dwellings and from ancient fossil feces, scientists have found that people were eating peppers as early as 7000 B.C.

Cayenne is one of the main foods of the Hunzas in Asia, along with apricots and their pits, millet and other simple foods. These people live to over a hundred years of age, which some say is because of their natural immune-boosting and [anti-inflammatory foods](#) that they consume daily. Cayenne peppers were even growing in the Hawaiian Islands in as early as 1897; these smaller and more pungent fruits were called "Hawaiian Chili Peppers."

Today, you can find cayenne pepper all over the world, and it now has a reputation for its health benefits. An interesting and popular detox and weight loss regime recently has been the cayenne pepper diet, which is a "cleansing" that flushes toxins from the body. The diet consists of a lemon and cayenne drink that is consumed about six times a day, and this lasts for about 10 days. The drink recipe calls for two tablespoons of lemon or lime juice, two tablespoons of real maple syrup, a pinch of cayenne pepper and eight ounces of water.

How to Use/Cook Cayenne Pepper

Cayenne peppers are available year around in the markets; you can find them in fresh, dried or powdered form. Because powdered cayenne pepper is sometimes a mix a poorer quality herbs, it's best to buy cayenne peppers fresh; however, if you are using dried or powdered pepper, the health benefits are still awesome.

In the store, look for raw, fresh chilies that have a brilliant red color and a healthy stem. Make sure there aren't any spots, mold or spoiled tips. The pepper should look wholesome and firm. Once at home, store your peppers inside the refrigerator in a plastic bag; they will stay fresh for about a week.

Dry peppers are also available at the supermarket, especially health food stores. Dry peppers can be stored using airtight containers in a cool and dark place. Dried cayenne peppers can be milled to powder using a hand mill, or you can buy dry powder instead. Go for powders that are authentic and branded products — there are even organic options.

Fresh cayenne chili peppers can be used to make spicy drinks, sauce, chutney or can even be used for pickling. Make sure you wash them well first — you want to use any dirt, sand or fungicides.

Taking cayenne pepper that is dried or powdered, you can add to meals for a spicy (and healthy) kick. It can be added to meat, pasta, eggs, nuts and veggies — there are a ton of options. Start with a 1/2 teaspoon or so, and then work your way up; remember that it adds heat and can be too much for people who are spice-sensitive.

If you want a quick fix that will help you to experience these amazing cayenne pepper benefits, an easy way to get it in your body is by mixing cayenne powder in a drink with water and lemon, which is similar to the drink consumed during the cayenne pepper diet, so it will give you the same detoxifying results. Capsaicin capsules are also available for purchase.

There are also creams that contain capsaicin, the main component of cayenne pepper, that can be found in most stores. These creams are used to treat skin infections, sore muscles and tension. By rubbing a small amount of cream on the affected area, you will feel the pain and irritation subside.

If you are using a cream, make sure to read the directions carefully so that you don't use too much. Also, be sure to wash your hands after applying capsaicin cream because it can cause a burning sensation on your hands; try washing with vinegar and water for the best results.