



Spices in food - Flavour along with heart health?

Recent reports suggest that spices have anti-oxidant ability and reduce blood cholesterol. Cinnamon (1-6g/day) was shown to reduce different types of blood lipids (fats) such as total cholesterol, low-density lipoprotein (LDL) cholesterol, and triglyceride levels by 7 to 30% in diabetic patients as compared to patients who took placebo.

The beneficial effects of a large dose (14g) of high-antioxidant containing spice blend (including black pepper, cinnamon, cloves, garlic powder, ginger, oregano (Mediterranean), paprika, rosemary, and turmeric) was studied by researchers from The Pennsylvania State University.

Antioxidant ability of blood was enhanced by 13% after consumption of the meal with the spice blend as compared to the meal without it. The blend of spices and herbs also helped improve levels of post meal insulin and triglyceride concentrations.

Similarly, a combined analysis of 39 studies using garlic in patients with high cholesterol levels (less than 200mg/dl) showed that it decreased total cholesterol by 17 ± 6 mg/dL and LDL cholesterol by 9 ± 6 mg/dL and increased high-density lipoprotein (HDL) or good cholesterol by 1.5 mg/dL.