

Herbs for Health

When we speak of herbs, we generally refer to the plant leaves and stems. Herbs are a healthy addition to any recipe, each contributing unique flavours without extra fat, salt and calories.

Storing Fresh Herbs

There is nothing like the addition of fresh herbs to enhance flavours but leftover herbs can quickly decompose and end up in compost. To extend herb life:

- **Bouquet Method:** Snip stem ends, place in container of cold water. Cover loosely with a plastic bag. Place in warmest section of refrigerator. Trim ends every 2 days and refresh water.
- **Wrap Method:** Snip stem ends, wrap in a moist (not wet) paper towel and place in sealable plastic baggie. Remoisten every few days and watch for any sign of mold.

Storing Dried Herbs

Although fresh herbs provide the best flavour, dried counterparts are an economical alternative. Store herb jars in a dark, cool cupboard. The flavour will fade after one year so note date of purchase or visit a bulk store and buy just enough for a recipe.



Nutritional Properties

Lavender—Is a natural relaxant and antiseptic agent. Add a few flowers to salads or substitute for rosemary. Lavender tea is a delightful bedtime beverage.

Basil—Has anti-inflammatory, anti-microbial and anti-oxidant properties. Add to pasta sauce or enjoy the leaves on sliced ripe tomatoes.

Cilantro—Is a good source of fiber, has anti-inflammatory properties, can relieve intestinal gas and quell nausea. Sprinkle on tacos and guacamole.

Mint—Can help relieve IBS (irritable bowel syndrome) symptoms. It also has antiviral and antibacterial properties. Add a few leaves to water or tea. Wonderful with green peas.

Rosemary—Is a good source of Vitamins A, B6, and C, and has antimicrobial properties. Add to lamb, pasta and roasted root vegetables.

Source:

<http://www.besthealthmag.ca/eat-well/nutrition/5-health-benefits-of-fresh-herbs?slide=1>
<http://www.webmd.com/food-recipes/features/spices-and-herbs-health-benefits>

