

 **KSTATE** Research and Extension
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Herbs

Ginger

Zingiber officinale

What are the folklore uses of ginger?

The traditional uses of ginger include treatment of ailments involving the large intestine and colon, nausea, indigestion, paralysis of the tongue, morning sickness, vomiting, hot flashes, menstrual cramps and gas.

What is ginger?

Ginger comes from the root of the ginger plant. It is valued throughout the world as a spice used in cooking and baking. It also may have some medicinal value.

What are the proposed medicinal uses of ginger?

According to research, ginger's medicinal uses center on its ability to prevent motion sickness and calm an upset stomach. Additional information has suggested that it may inhibit blood clotting.

How effective is ginger?

Studies on individuals highly susceptible to motion sickness have concluded that ginger is more effective than the usual medications. It also appears to reduce vomiting in some instances, but has not been found effective in treating the side effects of cancer chemotherapy. While ginger is known to prevent nausea, research is unclear about its ability to slow blood clotting.

How effective is ginger ale in calming an upset stomach?

Most ginger ales use an artificial flavoring, and contain little or no ginger. Usually there is not enough ginger in the beverage to be effective.

What precautions should be considered when taking ginger?

Taking ginger could be harmful for individuals with a low platelet count who have nausea and vomiting as side effects of chemotherapy. In

that situation, using the herb could trigger gastrointestinal bleeding.

Ginger appears to act as a blood thinner. Individuals who take aspirin or other medications that lengthen clotting time should consult a physician before taking large quantities of ginger. Using small amounts of fresh ginger in cooking

is not a cause for concern.

Some studies show that very large doses might cause depression of the central nervous system, but ginger may be the remedy of choice for treating motion sickness. Its side effects are minimal when compared to those associated with antihistamines, the drugs usually used to treat such symptoms.

What are the recommended forms and dosages of ginger?

When ginger is used to prevent motion sickness, two to four grams daily is most effective. Ginger capsules usually contain 500 milligrams, or one-half gram, of ginger powder. To be effective in preventing motion sickness, two capsules should be taken 30 minutes before departure, and then one to two more capsules during transportation, if symptoms occur. Ginger also is available as a tea or candied, and can be found in Oriental food markets or in supermarket spice sections.



Conclusion

Researchers are not sure how ginger works, but most studies have shown evidence that it can prevent motion sickness symptoms, such as nausea and vomiting. Ginger also may work as a blood-thinner.

Sources:

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