

The many health properties of garlic

Chapter 01: What are the health benefits?

Garlic is a natural detoxifier and can greatly improve your cardiovascular health. Studies have shown that it reduces high cholesterol and high blood pressure, and can be especially effective in maintaining a healthy blood pressure range if you have a family history of it. Glutathione, a natural antioxidant that your body produces, gets a nice boost from garlic, which is why you can rely on it to help detox your system.

Chapter 02: Activate the allicin

In order to gain the health benefits of garlic, you must crush it or chop it. This is because the various plant compounds found in this vegetable, which belongs to the onion family, need to be activated to be effective. Allicin,

a polyphenol, is the compound that gives you the antioxidant boost. In raw garlic allicin lies inactive, until you trigger the chemical process by crushing or chopping it.

How much do you need to eat? About 3 grams a day, or the equivalent of one small clove. Fresh, raw garlic provides the most benefits, as cooking or preservation methods, such as dried garlic, kills a lot of the allicin content. So an easy way to eat it is by adding a crushed clove to your salad dressing. Cooking garlic at a high temperature kills the allicin, so you could try adding it to the pan right at the end so that it's lightly cooked. Or, if you're game, you could chew a clove, raw and natural. Afterwards, neutralize the strong taste with a cup of green tea, lemon juice or by chewing parsley leaves.

Chapter 03: The three-minute window

There is one crucial factor that you need to be aware of when eating garlic for health benefits. Once allicin is activated, it rapidly loses its potency. So you have about three minutes in which to eat the garlic to gain its maximum power. This is why garlic extract and garlic supplements exist, because you can be sure to get the therapeutic effect from the allicin.

Chapter 04: Ask your doctor

Before taking garlic in supplement form, it's best to talk to your doctor. There can be some downsides to taking it in such a potent form, such as an increased risk of hemorrhage. It can also interfere with other medications, including blood thinners, like Aspirin. Do you already know whether you're allergic to garlic? It can trigger an allergic reaction, so it's important to also make sure it's fine for you.