

Nutrition Talk

The Amazing Health Benefits of Pumpkin Spice

The last day of Summer was September 22 and now we are officially into Fall. The time of year when the weather cools, the leaves are turning, the children are playing in the fallen leaves and we start to reach for the spices and smells of autumn. The most prevalent one is pumpkin spice. Why do we reach for that blend of spices as the weather cools? One big reason is that the blend of spices is warming and when you have added them to your tea, coffee or into baking, the smell is divine and the spices literally warm you up from the inside out. Pumpkin spice is usually a blend of cinnamon, ginger, nutmeg, cloves, allspice and ground clove; additional spices to add are cardamom and mace. Not only do these spices warm you up, they have a couple other amazing attributes:

1) **Antioxidants** help reduce oxidative stress in the body. When you have oxidative stress in your body you are literally rusting from the inside out. Enough oxidative stress and you start to look older than you really are. The spices blended to form pumpkin spice have some high antioxidant capabilities. In order from best to least are: cloves, cinnamon, allspice, nutmeg, ginger, cardamom and mace. These spices taste great and they also help to reduce oxidative damage in your body which can, eventually, help reverse the signs of aging.

2) **Sugar Uptake Inhibitors** are spices that slow the release of sugar into the blood stream. Cinnamon, cardamom and clove are some of the best at slowing down the release of sugar into the bloodstream. I will refer them as **the 3C's** from now on. To highlight what is meant by sugar uptake inhibitor, take two doughnuts, both with exceptionally sweet frosting. One doughnut is plain and the other is spiced with the 3's. Once the plain doughnut is consumed, it will spike your blood sugar faster than you can say supercalifragilisticexpialidocious (Yes I love Mary Poppins). If instead, you had the one with the 3C's, the sugar will go into your system much slower which will allow your blood sugar to stay at a more constant level. Stable blood sugar is what we all want.

I've talked about how these spices have antioxidant effect and how they slow down the body's absorption of sugar. Now you know why, as the weather cools you reach for the delectable aroma of pumpkin spice and you also know why it is good to include them into your day to day preparations.

To your vibrant health and vibrant life,
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Nutrition Talk at the Hall

Nadine will host a practical discussion around improving health.

First Wednesday of every month at the hall. First talk on **November 7**
@7:30 pm

Topic: Food and Guilt - how it affects your body.

Drop in, everyone welcome