

Capsicum annum
Family: *Solanaceae* – nightshade, tomato, peppers
Parts: fruit

All peppers have medicinal properties, but cayenne seems to have the strongest and what is used the most for medicinal purpose.

Properties:

Analgesic, antibacterial, anti-catarrhal, anti-inflammatory, anti-microbial, antiseptic, antispasmodic, anti-tumor, anti-ulcer, astringent, carminative, hemostatic, rubefacient stimulant, styptic, thermogenic.

Energetics: hot, dry, warming
Systems Affected: cardiovascular, digestive

Uses

- Circulation stimulant warms the body and extremities
- Heart attack, stroke, shock (give victim 1 tsp powder mixed with 1 cup warm water or dropperful of tincture under tongue-this is great to have in an emergency first aid kit)
- Heart tonic (supports arteries, blood vessels and heart)
- Rebuilds vein structures and removes plaque from veins
- Prevents blood clots, keeps blood flowing freely through the veins
- Lowers cholesterol and triglyceride levels, reducing heart disease
- Hemorrhage
- Digestive aid; enhances digestion and absorption
- Diarrhea related to infection
- Muscle and joint pain (internal and external)
- Cramps and menstrual pain
- Sprains and strains
- Ulcers
- Asthma
- Pain reliever (use topically)
- Muscle pain and tenderness caused by fibromyalgia
- Pain associated with shingles, chicken pox, and herpes
- Headaches
- Cold and flu
- Sore throat, respiratory congestion, tonsillitis, laryngitis
- Oral health to prevent and help with dental issues
- Self-defense in pepper sprays and for pest control in the garden

Herb Preparations

- Tea (use 1 tsp cayenne to 1 cup warm water)
- Tincture
- Powder (sprinkle a small amount into slippers or shoes to warm cold feet)
- Capsules
- Honey
- Herbal oil
- Salve, ointment, liniment
- Food: add to meals

Care/Harvesting

- Cayenne likes a bright, sunny, and warm location.
- Transplant into full sun after the last frost.
- Prefers dry soil, requires little water.
- Plant next to basil and cilantro, but stay away from sweet peppers, it will make them hot.
- Use gloves when picking, pick the fruit when it is bright red.
- For dehydrating and making powder, wash with warm water and dry completely. Remove stems (keeping those gloves on) and slice in half. Place on dehydrator tray and set the temp. between 135 – 145 for 8-12 hours.
- Once dry, blend into a powder and store in a cool, dark location.

Caution

This is a perfectly safe herb but can be hot! Use appropriate dosages and watch for skin irritation. Not recommended for children under two and in small amounts for older children. Be careful when handling cayenne, it will burn, gloves are always recommended.