



Food and nutrition with naturopath **SOPHIE ATKIN**
North East Natural Health Centre



Help for your digestion

Do you suffer from symptoms of heartburn, bloating, irritable bowel syndrome (IBS) or general tummy troubles?

These can be a sign that you need to strengthen your digestion.

The following herbs can be added to food or taken as a herbal medicine to improve the way your tummy functions.



- **Fennel:** the best medicine for ‘trapped wind’, this herbs works well for babies, children and adults. Traditionally fennel has been used to stimulate the secretion of digestive acids and bile, reducing flatulence and dyspepsia, relieving intestinal inflammation and gastro-intestinal ulcers, and in many cultures is eaten as a convalescence food to help reclaim the appetite after a flu or infection. Chew the seeds between meals to help gas and bloating.
- **Cinnamon:** used to relieve bloating, flatulence, nausea, vomiting and diarrhoea, and has an antispasmodic effect. Traditionally cinnamon was also used for colic and infantile diarrhoea. Cinnamon brings warmth to the digestion, and as such is added to many foods and drinks during the colder months. A simple way to introduce cinnamon is to add one teaspoon of it to a cup of hot water, along with a teaspoon of honey. Stir, and drink after dinner.
- **Ginger:** famous for its digestive actions – especially with regard to nausea. Ginger can also be used to relieve other digestive problems such as vomiting, colic, flatulence and cramping.
- **Peppermint:** traditionally used to improve various aspects of the digestive system such as flatulence, diarrhoea, bloating, reflux and indigestion. You can easily grow peppermint in the garden and add a small handful to salads, drink it in tea or rub a drop of the oil onto a sore, swollen tummy.
- **Sage:** traditionally used for the treatment of flatulence, dyspepsia and debilitated digestive system. Sage is best added to meats and rich cooked foods, so the stomach won’t struggle with the digestive process. Think roast lamb and creamy potatoes, and add a tablespoon of sage.
- **As you can see, digestive herbs and spices have a long history in cooking and are added to foods for more than just their flavour.**

