

Ready to start planning your care? Call us at [800-525-2225](tel:800-525-2225) to make an appointment.

×



Memorial Sloan Kettering  
Cancer Center

[Make an Appointment](#)

[Back](#)

[Search About Herbs](#)

[Learn About Cinnamon & Treatment](#)

[Refer a Patient](#)

MSK

## ABOUT US

[Our mission, vision & core values](#)

[Leadership](#)

[History](#)

[Equality, diversity & inclusion](#)

[Annual report](#)

[Give to MSK](#)

Evidence suggests possible benefits with cinnamon for lowering blood sugar and blood fat levels, but additional studies are needed to confirm this.

Cinnamon refers to several plants native to Southeast Asia. The bark, rich in essential oil, is used as a flavoring agent and as a spice. Cinnamon has a long history of use as an herbal medicine.

Lab studies suggest that cinnamon has antibacterial, anti-inflammatory, and antioxidant properties. Studies in humans suggest it may help lower blood sugar, total cholesterol and triglyceride levels, and reduce risks for cardiovascular disease, stroke and diabetes. However, additional studies are needed to confirm these effects.

## What are the potential uses and benefits?

- Diabetes

Results have been mixed for various diabetes-related markers. A few meta-analyses suggest

improvements in blood sugar and blood fat levels, but larger well-designed trials are needed to confirm these effects.

- Inflammation

Lab studies suggest that cinnamon can reduce inflammation, but human data are lacking.

- Arthritis

Cinnamon is used in traditional medicine for arthritis, but there is no scientific evidence to support this claim.

## What are the side effects?

- GI upset: stomachache, heartburn, nausea, constipation, diarrhea
- Allergic reactions

### Case reports

- Mouth sores: Associated with using oral cinnamon products like herbal toothpaste and gum.
- Occupational allergy: With cinnamon due to exposure to its compounds.
- Skin irritations: In one case with use of vaginal suppositories containing cinnamon oil, and in another case after consuming herbal tea that had large amounts of cinnamon.

## What else do I need to know?

### Patient Warnings:

- Some cinnamon products contain high levels of coumarin, a natural constituent, that can cause liver damage.

### Do Not Take if:

- CYP450 2A6, 2C9, 2D, and 3A4 substrate drugs: Lab studies suggest cinnamon may increase the risk of side effects of these drugs. Clinical relevance has yet to be determined.
- Statins: When taken along with statins, cinnamon has been reported to cause hepatitis.
- Pioglitazone (an antidiabetic drug): Animal studies show that when used together, cinnamon can increase the bioavailability of pioglitazone.

If you have any questions, contact a member of your care team directly. If you're a patient at MSK and you need to reach a provider after 5 p.m., during the weekend, or on a holiday, call 212-639-2000.

For more resources, visit [www.mskcc.org/pe](http://www.mskcc.org/pe) to search our virtual library.

Cinnamon - Last updated on June 8, 2021

[Communication preferences](#)

[Cookie preferences](#)

[Legal disclaimer](#)

[Accessibility statement](#)

[Privacy policy](#)

[Price transparency](#)

[Public notices](#)

© 2024 Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center