

# Black Pepper

Botanical: *Piper nigrum*

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Black pepper stimulates the taste bud sending a message to the stomach to increase its hydrochloric acid secretions which improves the digestion. This increase in digestive activity ensures that food is properly digested prior to arriving in the intestines. Black pepper helps stimulate the breakdown of fat cells.

## Western



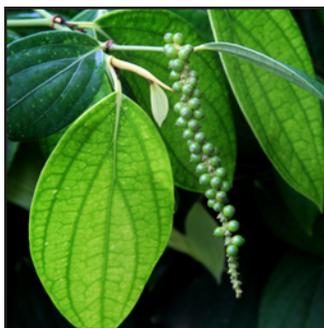
**Western Name:** Black Pepper

**Also Known As:** Pepper, Black Peppercorn, Piper

**Main Systems:** Digestion, Lungs, Brain, Skin

**Key Actions:** Carminative, Diuretic, Diaphoretic, Antioxidant, Anti-inflammatory, Antibacterial, Expectorant, Antiseptic

**Key Medicinal Uses:** Intestinal gas, heartburn, indigestion, constipation, diarrhea, promotes sweating, increases urination, weight loss, cough, colds, skin problems, vitiligo, peptic ulcers, dementia, atherosclerosis, asthma, prevent gangrene, toothache, gum swellings, antistress, depression, headaches, menstrual cramps, cancer, bronchitis, colic.



**BASIC HABITAT/BOTANY:** Black pepper is a flowering, smooth, woody vine that can grow up to 33 feet. It is in the family Piperaceae. They begin to bear small white clustered flowers after 3-4 years that develop into the berries that are dried and then known as peppercorns. The pepper berry is a drupe, producing a single seed. A single stem will bear 20-30 fruiting spikes. Native to Southern India, black pepper likes hot humid tropical climates. It is extensively cultivated in India.

**KEY CONSTITUENTS:** Manganese (37% of RDA), Vitamin K (16%) A and C, Copper, Iron, Chromium, Calcium, Potassium, Oxalate, Dietary fiber, Phytochemicals (including Amides, Piperine, Piperidines, Pyrrolidines).

**PARTS MOST FREQUENTLY USED:** Peppercorns

**FLAVORS/TEMPS:** Pungent, Warming, Hot

**CAUTION:** Very safe. Essential oil can be irritating to the skin.

**HISTORY/FOLKLORE:** Black pepper is called the "King of Spices." The potassium in black pepper aids digestion and the outer layer of the peppercorns aids the break-down of fat cells. In ancient times, when there was no refrigeration, it was especially valuable for its ability to mask a food's lack of freshness or if a food had begun to go rancid. However, peppers used as a preservative remains questionable as the value of the spice and the amount needed to actually preserve a meat would make it less likely to be used than salt which is excellent for preserving. Pepper was valued as a flavoring and medicine.



## Eastern



**Pin Yin:** Hei Hu Jiao (translates as Black Pepper)

**Also Known As:** Hu Jiao, Hu Jiao Li

**Main Meridians:** Stomach, Large Intestines

**Key Actions:** Warms the Stomach, Warms the Interior, Expels Cold, Calms Rebellious Qi, Reduces Pain

**Key Medicinal Uses:** Abdominal pain, indigestion, diarrhea, colds, flu, chills & fevers, headaches, bronchitis, arthritis, depression, menstrual cramps, nausea, constipation, food stagnation, intestinal cramping, malaria, constipation, joint pain, muscle aches, coughs, wheezing.

## FUN FACT!



### Organic Pepper

The adverse effects of irradiating (a non-organic process used on pepper and other vegetables and spices) cause a significant loss of pepper's vitamin C content. Organic is best.



### Staying Fresh

Whole peppercorns can be kept indefinitely if stored in a cool, dark, dry place. Ground pepper can only stay fresh for about three months. Pepper loses flavor and aroma through evaporation. Airtight containers help preserve its flavor and scent.



### Strengthen the Mind & Heart

Black pepper essential oil is used to relax, invigorate the mind, and strengthen the heart.

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