Cayenne peppers are delicious spicy chili peppers that are packed with medicinal properties, vitamins and minerals. People have been using cayenne peppers for thousands of years to spice up food and for their healing power. Cayenne pepper powder is full of antioxidants and helps reduce inflammation, prevents heart disease, and boosts your digestive health.

Most of the health benefits of cayenne pepper are due to a compound in the chili called capsaicin. This is the active component in chilies that give them their spicy kick.

The health benefits of using cayenne supplements don't just apply to consuming this type of chili pepper. You can apply cayenne pepper capsaicin cream to relieve skin disorders and alleviate nerve pain and migraines.

What is it about cayenne pepper that makes this chili pepper so useful in treating many health problems? In this article, you will learn about the many health benefits of cayenne pepper. You will also find out how to use capsaicin for its many therapeutic uses.

**What is Cayenne Pepper?**

Cayenne pepper is a type of hot chili pepper in the *Capsicum annuum* species of plants. Cayenne peppers are related to bell peppers, jalapenos, and other types of chilies.

The journal *Food Chemistry* reports that capsaicinoids develop in cayenne peppers as they ripen. From these compounds, capsaicin is the main active component that gives
Researchers say that capsaicin in cayenne pepper has many health benefits. Capsaicin has pain-relieving properties and has been connected with treating arthritis symptoms. (1)

**Nutritional Value of Cayenne Pepper**

Cayenne pepper contains vitamins and minerals that provide many health benefits. Cayenne pepper is low in fat and carbohydrates and contains vitamins A, C, K, and E. Many of these vitamins have antioxidant properties that strengthen your health.

5 grams (one teaspoon) of cayenne pepper contains the following nutrients: (3)

- 16 calories
- 2185 IU vitamin A (44% RDI)
- 4 mg vitamin C (7% RDI)
- 6 mg vitamin E (8% RDI)
- 2 mg vitamin K (5% RDI)
- 1 mg vitamin B6 (6% RDI)
- 1 mg manganese (5% RDI)
- 105 mg potassium (3% RDI)
- 4 mg iron (2% RDI)
- 6 mg **omega-3** fatty acids
- 4 g dietary fiber (6% RDI)

As well as the above-mentioned nutrients, cayenne pepper also contains traces of B-group vitamins, protein, calcium, magnesium, selenium, copper, and zinc.

However, the greatest health benefits of cayenne pepper come from antioxidants like phenolic and flavonoid compounds. A study of the medicinal properties of *Capsicum annum* peppers (cayenne pepper) found them to be rich in antioxidants. (4)

**Health Benefits of Cayenne Pepper**

Let's look in more detail at the many reasons why taking more cayenne pepper in your diet could be good for you.

**Cayenne Pepper has Anti-Inflammatory Properties**

One of the most important health benefits of consuming more cayenne pepper is due to its anti-inflammatory activity.

Inflammation in the body has been linked to the development of a number of chronic diseases. Some of these include heart disease, diabetes, asthma, and even cancer. (5)

A review published in 2018 on studies into the anti-inflammatory effect of capsaicin found that cayenne pepper can help prevent many chronic diseases. Compounds in cayenne pepper inhibit inflammatory responses in the body. This was also shown to have anticancer potential in laboratory tests. (6)

The anti-inflammatory effect of cayenne pepper can also help to reduce pain. Research has shown that as well as reducing inflammation, cayenne pepper also has an analgesic effect. In fact, capsaicin was as effective as some non-steroidal anti-
Please see my previous article to find out more natural alternatives to NSAIDs. At the end of the article you can find out how to make a cayenne pepper drink for pain relief.

**Cayenne Pepper May Relieve Osteoarthritis (OA) and Rheumatoid Arthritis (RA)**

Applying topical creams containing capsaicin extract can help to relieve the symptoms of arthritis like joint pain.

The results of 5 double-blind randomized controlled trials found that capsaicin cream can relieve osteoarthritis. Patients applied 0.025% to 0.075% capsaicin ointments 4 times a day to sore joints. After 4 weeks, most patients reported less arthritis-related joint pain. There were no significant reported side effects of using capsaicin cream when treating osteoarthritis pain. (8)

Cayenne pepper lotion can also help to relieve rheumatoid arthritis joint pain. In a double-blind randomized trial, 0.025% capsaicin cream was effective at relieving arthritic knee pain. Around 80% of patients who used capsaicin ointment for pain relief reported positive results after 2 weeks of treatment. (9)

If you suffer from joint pain, find out how to make your own capsaicin oil in my article on the best spices for joint pain relief.

**Cayenne Pepper Cream Can Relieve Nerve Pain and Migraine Pain**

Another medicinal use for applying cayenne pepper ointments is to relieve nerve pain and headaches.

The *Journal of Palliative Medicine* reported that the powerful analgesic effect of cayenne pepper can help to manage neuropathic pain. Commercially available 0.025%, 0.075%, and 0.1% capsaicin creams are applied three to four times per day. Capsaicin 0.075% cream showed significant benefit in nerve pain relief compared to placebo. The research found that capsaicin helps activate certain nerve receptors. In time, this has a desensitizing effect on pain. (10)

Extracts from cayenne pepper can also be effective in treating migraine pain. For example, one small trial showed that the researchers applied topical capsaicin 0.1% or Vaseline jelly to the site of the migraine pain. It was found that the majority of patients who received the capsaicin treatment noted a 50% reduction in the intensity of headache pain. (11)

Please read my article on the best ways to relieve a migraine, or try these essential oils if you suffer from frequent migraines.

**Cayenne Pepper Powder Promotes Lower Blood Pressure**

Cayenne pepper may also help to lower blood pressure if you suffer from hypertension.

Research carried out on rats found that supplementing their diet with capsaicin had an anti-hypertensive effect. Capsaicin helped to dilate blood vessels and improve blood
circulation. The scientists noted that there are complex interactions that result in capsaicin lowering blood pressure. (12)

One of the ways that cayenne pepper seems to lower blood pressure is by decreasing the amount of salt stored in the body.

If you suffer from hypertension, please read my article to learn how to lower blood pressure naturally.

**Capsaicin Pills May Help to Protect Your Heart**

Cayenne pepper capsules can help to improve risk factors of coronary heart disease.

A randomized, double-blind controlled clinical trial found that capsaicin supplements significantly increased HDL cholesterol levels. This is the “good” type of cholesterol that is associated with heart health.

Taking capsaicin capsules, containing powders of chili skin also decreased triglyceride levels which can reduce your heart attack risk. In the trial, the participants took capsaicin capsules twice a day for 3 months. (13)

Did you know that 80% of heart attacks could be avoided by doing 5 simple things?

**Cayenne Pepper May Prevent Blood Clots**

Taking cayenne pepper supplements can help prevent blood clots forming in your arteries.

Research has shown that capsaicin can help to prevent platelets clumping together to form clots. In fact, in one study, capsaicin was more effective at preventing complications from pulmonary thromboembolism than aspirin or indomethacin. Pulmonary thromboembolism is when a blood clot travels to your lungs and can result in death. (14)

Please read my related article about blood clot in leg: signs and symptoms you shouldn’t ignore.

**Cayenne Pepper Can Boost Your Metabolism and Help You Lose Weight**

Cayenne pepper drinks or taking cayenne powder supplements can help you lose weight quicker.

Let’s look at some of the ways that cayenne pepper can help you lose weight.

**Cayenne pepper helps to boost metabolism.** A medical report from 2017 reported that cayenne pepper extracts stimulate receptors that increase metabolism. This can help to offset a number of complications associated with metabolic syndrome and obesity. (15)

**Cayenne pepper helps to increase the feeling of fullness.** Taking capsaicin supplements may help increase your feelings of satiety. A study on the gastrointestinal effects of capsaicin found that consuming more capsaicin reduced fat intake and suppressed appetite. (16)
Cayenne pepper affects hunger hormones. Another way that taking cayenne pepper can help lose weight is that it inhibits certain hunger hormones. Researchers discovered that capsaicin reduced the levels of the hormone ghrelin, often called the “hunger hormone.” (17)

In conclusion, a review of the anti-obesity effect of capsaicin supplements found that they can help to reduce obesity. The benefits of cayenne capsules on weight loss are that they increase energy expenditure, help burn body fat, and increase satiety. (18)

Please read my related article about 12 simple tweaks for weight loss.

Cayenne Capsules Can Improve Digestive Health

It may surprise you to learn, but the spicy components in cayenne pepper can actually promote healthy digestion.

A 2016 review on the digestive benefits of cayenne pepper plant extracts found that there are over 200 compounds in chili powder. Many of these compounds have a beneficial effect on gastrointestinal health. For example, taking capsaicin supplements can help to relieve heartburn, stimulate digestion, and even prevent ulcers. (19)

Capsaicin Powder Can Help Heal Peptic Ulcers

Contrary to popular belief, chili powder doesn't cause ulcers but can actually help heal gastric ulcers.

Scientists have discovered why cayenne pepper powder in the stomach helps to prevent and heal ulcers. The stimulating effect of cayenne powder increases mucus secretions and inhibit excess stomach acid. This has a protective effect on the stomach lining and helps ulcers heal quicker. (20)

You can find more natural treatment for stomach ulcers in this article.

Topical Capsaicin Cream Can Treat Psoriasis and Dermatitis

One of the benefits of using creams containing extracts of the cayenne pepper plant is to treat inflammatory skin conditions.

Psoriasis is a chronic skin condition that causes patches of red, scaly skin on your body. Dermatitis can be caused by irritants on the skin and results in inflamed skin that is itchy and sore.

Capsaicin-containing creams are effective in reducing pain and irritation associated with inflammatory skin conditions. Studies have shown that capsaicin inhibits inflammatory responses in the dermal layers of skin. This helps to reduce scaling, itchiness, and pain in psoriasis patients. (21)

Although the capsaicin cream may sting initially, with continued use, the sensation of pain goes down.

Read my other related articles about natural ways to relieve psoriasis and natural remedies for eczema.

Cayenne Pepper Has Anticancer Properties
Research into the properties of cayenne powder extract has revealed their potential for use in treating various cancers. The journal *Anticancer Research* reported in 2016 that capsaicin could have many benefits in cancer treatment. In lab trials, capsaicin extracts have shown a potential to inhibit and kill off cancer cells. In some cases, capsaicin helps to prevent cancer cells from multiplying and spreading. (22)

Experiments using mice have shown that capsaicin could have therapeutic potential in treating lung cancer. (23) Similar results have been demonstrated in treating prostate cancer. (24)

Researchers are still investigating the potential use of cayenne pepper to treat cancer in humans.

**How to Use Cayenne Pepper**

There are various ways to use cayenne pepper to take advantage of its health benefits.

For example, you can make spicy cayenne pepper water for a therapeutic drink. All you have to do to make a cayenne pepper drink is mix one-quarter to half a teaspoon of cayenne pepper powder (preferably organic) in a glass of hot or warm water.

Some people prefer to mix half a teaspoon cayenne pepper powder in juice, smoothie or stir it into their tea.

Of course, you can add a teaspoon or two to spice up your dishes and get the health benefits of cayenne pepper that way. A study from 2012 checked the effect of four different cooking processes (boiling, steaming, stir-frying, and roasting) on the antioxidant properties of red peppers and found that stir-frying and roasting preserved the nutrient and antioxidant components better than boiling and steaming. (25)

Another study from 2010 checked the effect of cooking on the capsaicinoids and phenolics contents of Mexican peppers. The study found that there were moderate losses in capsaicinoids in boiling, while grilling caused a significant increase in the content of these compounds. (28)

You can also use topical cayenne pepper ointments, oils, lotions, or creams to help relieve painful skin conditions. Many studies have shown that topical application containing between 0.025% and 0.1% capsaicin to be the most effective for treating pain and various skin conditions. Capsaicin cream should be applied 3 or 4 times a day. You should start to notice a reduction in pain after several days.

Cayenne pepper is also sold in capsules or tablet form as capsaicin extract. You can buy supplements ranging between 500 mg and 1,000 mg capsules.

**Cayenne Pepper Oil (Capsaicin Oil) for Joint, Muscle and Arthritis Pain**

Cayenne pepper oil can be helpful in treating certain cases of rheumatism, as well as for various other muscle aches and pains including back pain. The recipe is taken from my article about [the best spices & herbs to relieve pain](#).

**Cayenne pepper oil (capsaicin oil) recipe**
1 tbsp cayenne pepper
2 tbsp crushed mustard seeds
2 tsp grated ginger root
250 ml (8 fl oz) sunflower oil

Mix all the ingredients in a glass jar, and leave to infuse for 1 week. Strain the oil and massage the capsaicin oil into the affected areas to treat muscle and joint pain.

**How Much Cayenne Pepper to Take for Health Benefits?**

There is no set dosage of capsaicin extracts to take for health benefits.

If you decide to take supplements, most manufacturers recommend around 1,000 mg per day. This is claimed to improve gastrointestinal health, help in losing weight, and lower blood pressure.

If you want to use cayenne pepper, you can try making your own cayenne pepper tea. Mix between 1/4 and 1/2 a teaspoon cayenne pepper in a glass of warm water. Drink 2 or 3 times a day for best results.

To improve the taste of cayenne pepper drinks, you could add a squeeze of lemon juice with 1/4 teaspoon of ginger powder to really boost the health benefits of cayenne powder water.

**Precautions and Side Effects When Using Cayenne Pepper**

Cayenne pepper can irritate the skin and cause a lot of pain if it gets into your eyes. Therefore, you should exercise care when handling cayenne powder.

Doctors from WebMD recommend the following precautions when using capsaicin treatments: (26)

- If applying capsaicin cream topically, always wash your hands after using the ointment.
- Never use cayenne pepper ointments around the sensitive skin of your eyes.
- Don't use capsaicin creams on broken skin.
- Consuming too much cayenne pepper can cause stomach upset, diarrhea, and a runny nose.
- It is not recommended to take large doses of capsaicin supplements for a long period of time.
- Capsaicin can interact with the blood-thinning medication warfarin. (27)

**Related articles:**

- [The Best Spices & Herbs to Relieve Joint Pain and How to Use Them](#)
- [10 Amazing Spices and Herbs that Will Help you Lose Weight](#)
- [Top 10 Natural Tips and Treatments to Relieve Migraine](#)