


HERBS FOR A HEALTHY HOME



The Herbs for a Healthy Home project is a Willoughby City Council initiative that encourages inclusiveness, participation and a sense of belonging for everyone. In collaboration with the local multicultural community, the Herbs for a Healthy Home information cards showcase the different health benefits and uses of herbs, as well as their origin and cultural significance.



CARDAMOM



Cardamom leaves can be used to make a tasty tea that is said to aid digestion.



Wendy says: Cardamom originally comes from India and is used to flavour curries. It is also found in Middle Eastern cooking and used in Scandinavia to flavour cakes and pastries. Cardamom can be grown in pots and is easy to grow, but the plant does not always produce pods. Cardamom leaves can be used to make a tasty tea that is said to aid digestion. **Tip:** Chop leaves and leave to steep in hot water for a few minutes, then strain and enjoy this simple, healthy tea.


Nutritional information

Cardamom pods are a good source of minerals and contain **Iron** which helps blood hold and carry oxygen around the body and is also essential in creating enzymes and hormones; **Manganese** which plays an important role in building and maintaining strong bones and **Zinc** which is essential for many enzyme systems and maintains normal taste perception.

Wendy is a community participant of the Herbs for a Healthy Home project.
This card can be downloaded at www.willoughby.nsw.gov.au/community/multicultural/



CURRY LEAVES



The pungent
smell of crushed
curry leaves
are said to
help combat
depression.



Swati says: The **curry leaf** comes from the curry tree, which is native to India and Sri Lanka and can be found throughout South East Asia. It is easy to grow and can even be found growing in pots on balconies throughout Sydney. The leaf is used to flavour curries and is used every day in all kinds of dishes. In India, it is believed that curry leaves are high in iron and chewing raw leaves in the morning is used as a natural diabetes remedy. The pungent smell of crushed curry leaves are said to help combat depression.

Nutritional information

Curry leaves are rich in **Vitamin A** which keeps eyes and skin healthy and helps to protect against infection; **Iron** which helps blood hold and carry oxygen around the body and is also essential in creating enzymes and hormones; and **Calcium** which strengthens bones and teeth.

Swati is a community participant of the Herbs for a Healthy Home project.

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FENUGREEK

Fenugreek is believed to have health benefits including inducing labour and curing acne.



Amrin says: Fenugreek is an ancient plant that is found in South Asia, Middle East, Europe and North America. Dried fenugreek leaves have immense flavour and are commonly used in curries. Fenugreek leaves can be used fresh or dried, and seeds can be crushed into a powder or soaked overnight (sprouted) to be used in salads. Fenugreek is also believed to have many health benefits including helping to aid digestion, inducing labour, preventing diabetes, curing acne and adding shine to hair.


Nutritional information

Fenugreek leaves contain all the goodness associated with green vegetables including **dietary fibre**, which helps smooth bowel movements and **Vitamin K** which helps the clotting of blood following cuts or haemorrhage. Fenugreek seeds contain **Iron** which helps blood hold and carry oxygen around the body and is also essential in creating enzymes and hormones.

Amrin is a community participant of the Herbs for a Healthy Home project. This card can be downloaded at www.willoughby.nsw.gov.au/community/multicultural/



GREEN GRASS JELLY



Green Grass Jelly leaves contain Polyphenols, a source of antioxidants.



See Mee says: Green Grass Jelly is used in many Asian countries including Indonesia, Malaysia, China and Singapore.

Considered a 'Yin' food in Traditional Chinese Medicine, the plant is thought of as a "cool" food and is commonly used to make a refreshing dessert or health tonic. The plant's spade shaped leaves are believed to contain many antioxidants.

Nutritional information

Green Grass Jelly leaves contain dietary fibre which helps smooth bowel movements; Vitamin A, which keeps eyes and skin healthy and helps to protect against infection; and Polyphenols, which is a good source of antioxidants and helps regulate the immune system.

See Mee is a community participant of the Herbs for a Healthy Home project.

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LEMON MYRTLE

Lemon Myrtle contains lutein which has an important role in eye health.



Jo says: **Lemon Myrtle** is native to coastal regions of Australia and was traditionally used as a medicine by Indigenous Australians. Leaves can be dried or oil can be extracted to flavour food, make tea and create a fresh fragrance. Lemon Myrtle has a strong lemony flavour but lacks the acidity of citrus fruit so it can be used with dairy products without curdling. It is also used in savoury dishes such as pasta, stir-fries, fish and grilled meats. It is unsuitable for extended cooking times, as a strong eucalyptus flavour can emerge. Lemon Myrtle is believed to be a good flu remedy because it is high in Vitamin C.

Nutritional information

Lemon Myrtle contains **Lutein** which has an important role in eye health and protecting the retina; as well as **Folate**, **Vitamin A**, **Vitamin E**, **Zinc** and **Magnesium** which are required for the synthesis and self-repair of DNA.

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LEMONGRASS

Lemongrass contains Folate which can help certain types of anaemia.



Annie and John say: Lemongrass is originally from Southern Asia and is used in many Asian cuisines including Thai, Vietnamese and Malaysian. The top, green part of the plant is used to make tea whilst the hard stem can be used for cooking. Lemongrass is believed to aid digestion and it can also be made into an ointment to ward off mosquitoes. It has been observed that the plant's aroma will keep mosquitoes away as well.


Nutritional information

Lemongrass contains **Folate** which can help certain types of anaemia and ulcers and it can also reduce the risk of neural tube defects in the developing foetus. **Potassium** is an important component of cell and body fluids that helps control heart rate and blood pressure. **Citral** (a chemical component) has strong anti-microbial and anti-fungal properties.

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OLD GINGER



In Traditional Chinese Medicine ginger is used to calm the stomach and stop nausea.



Yvonne says: **Ginger** is a root that is commonly used in cooking for its flavour. Old ginger is ginger that has been allowed to grow and mature over time and it is believed to have more health benefits. Old ginger can be identified by its dark, thick skin and dense flesh. In Traditional Chinese Medicine, ginger is used to calm the stomach, stop nausea and prevent car sickness and mild seasickness. A simple tea can be made by peeling the old ginger, cutting into chunks, adding brown sugar to taste and boiling it in water for 15-20 minutes.

Nutritional information

Old ginger contains **Manganese** which has an important role in building and maintaining strong bones and **Potassium** which is an important component of cell and body fluids that help control heart rate and blood pressure. Essential oils found in ginger, such as **Gingerol**, have powerful anti-inflammatory and antioxidant effects.

Yvonne is a community participant of the Herbs for a Healthy Home project. This card can be downloaded at www.willoughby.nsw.gov.au/community/multicultural/



PANDAN LEAVES



In Singapore, the Pandan leaf is used as a natural air freshener.



Mary and Bo say: The Pandan plant is known as ‘the vanilla of South-East Asia’ because of its sweet, nutty fragrance and is used to flavour many dishes in Malaysian and Singaporean cuisines. Pandan leaves can be used to extract juice to flavour desserts such as the famous Malaysian Pandan cake, or simply tied into a knot to add flavour to rice and desserts. In Singapore, the Pandan leaf is also used as a natural air freshener. Pandan is a very sought after plant, particularly in Sydney, because of its difficulty to grow in the local climate.

Nutritional information

Pandan leaves have potential health benefits based on many studies and observations. The leaves are rich in essential oils.

Mary and Bo are community participants of the Herbs for a Healthy Home project. This card can be downloaded at www.willoughby.nsw.gov.au/community/multicultural/



PARSLEY

Parsley is
rich in
Vitamin B which
helps the body
obtain energy
from food.



Olya says: Parsley comes from the Mediterranean region and is widely used to flavour food in Europe, the Middle East and America. It is commonly used in Persian cooking, particularly in meat dishes (lamb, chicken and beef) as well as in salads. In Iran, parsley is used for its health benefits as it is believed to aid digestion, improve skin and cleanse the kidneys. A tea can be made by cutting off the roots and boiling for 15 minutes in water.

Nutritional information

Parsley is rich in many essential vitamins including **Vitamin B** which helps the body obtain energy from food; **Beta-carotene** to help the immune system and lower the risk of developing cancer; and **Potassium** which helps control heart rate and blood pressure.

Olya is a community participant of the Herbs for a Healthy Home project.

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TURMERIC

Turmeric is believed to reduce inflammation, heal sore throats and speed the recovery of wounds.



Neena says: Turmeric belongs to the ginger family and can be used fresh or as a dried powder. It is widely used to flavour food in Asia, the Middle East, North Africa and Scandinavia and is one of the most commonly used spices in Indian cuisine. Turmeric also has medicinal and cultural significance and is believed to reduce inflammation, heal sore throats and speed the recovery of wounds. Traditionally, Turmeric is used as a preparation before Hindu weddings as a body scrub to cleanse the body, soften and colour the skin. It has also been used as a dye for thousands of years.

Nutritional information

Turmeric root is rich in **Iron** which helps blood hold and carry oxygen around the body and is also essential in creating enzymes and hormones; as well as **Potassium** to help control heart rate and blood pressure; and **Manganese** which plays an important role in building and maintaining strong bones.

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