



Onion

Colds, flu, cholesterol, heart, blood pressure

Information: Herbals/Nutritionals/Medicinals can be very strong, consequently, if each one is not tailored to your specific needs, then you can risk more harm than good. This information is meant to be used by your VHC Medical Team and personal Physician as they build your Total Health Plan. Never attempt to adjust your prescribed medications and/or Natural Treatments without your physician's and Medical Team's knowledge and guidance. Since herbals/nutritionals and medications can interact with each other, it is always advisable to consult with your health care provider and The Vibrant Health Community at www.VibrantHealthCommunity.com (or call 1-866-378-8253) *before* starting/changing your program.

Botanical: *Allium cepa*

Family: *Alliaceae* (onion) - *Liliaceae* (lily)

Other common names: Common Onion

If you are trying to keep colds, flu and many other illnesses at bay, try the humble **Onion!**

Like garlic, it is said to protect against infection and help to *build the immune system and support healthy cholesterol and blood sugar levels.*

Onion is a hardy perennial bulb that is native to southwest Asia (although its origin remains debatable), and it is now cultivated as a crop throughout the world. It grows from eight inches to three feet in height and thrives in rich, moist, well-drained soil (but will tolerate poorer soil) in full sun (but will tolerate partial shade). The Onion has been cultivated for over five thousand years and has been used in herbal medicine and as an indispensable flavoring agent or as a vegetable that is cooked or eaten raw. The

name Onion is derived from the Latin, *unio*, meaning "one large pearl," and it is interesting to note that the Chinese called the Onion the "jewel among vegetables." The Greek historian, Herodotus, related that nine tons of gold were spent purchasing Onions to feed the builders of the pyramids, because the Onion was so popular in ancient Egypt, and the Hebrews complained sorely to Moses that they missed the Onion when they departed Egypt for the Promised Land. The Greek physician, Dioscorides, noted in the first century that athletes were given Onions to fortify them for the Olympic Games, and the Roman, Pliny, catalogued the efficacy of the Onion to heal sores, dysentery and bites, and to induce sleep. We can thank the Romans for introducing Onions throughout Europe when the army journeyed northward on the continent. In the

Middle Ages the Onion was used as a charm against evil spirits and the plague, and the Pilgrims brought the Onion with them to the New World on the *Mayflower*, only to find several species already growing wild when they arrived. The Native Americans had long since been using Onion as a favorite spring food; and later, frontiersmen often followed the heavy Onion scent that clung to the air when they were tracking tribal encampments. The stronger the smell of Onions, the more potent and effective their healing powers, and it is interesting to note that Onions, closely related to garlic, shallots and leeks, are also a cousin of the fragrant lily. Some of the constituents included in Onion are sulfur compounds, such as allyl propyl disulphide (which accounts for its sharp flavor and aroma), flavonoids, quercetin, B-vitamins, vitamin C, potassium, dietary fiber and folic acid. Onions also contain calcium, iron and have a high protein quality. Onions are low in sodium and contain no fat.

Beneficial Uses: Onion is one of nature's best natural immunity enhancers that protects against infection of all kinds. As a powerful antibiotic and antiseptic, it is a wonderful way to build up the body's natural defenses against all sorts of ailments, including common colds, flu, sore throat, bronchial infection, gastric infection, worms, dysentery and typhoid - among many others.

Regarding good heart health, Onion is said to promote healthy blood pressure levels. It is said to raise blood levels of beneficial HDL (good cholesterol) and clean out the arteries of LDL (bad cholesterol) that can clog them, choking off blood flow through the heart. Onion is also believed to prevent proteins from massing to form harmful clots in the blood, thereby promoting better blood circulation and reducing the risk of heart attack, arteriosclerosis and stroke. Onions are said to be particularly effective against greasy or fatty foods, and by reducing the cholesterol and fat content in the blood, the heart receives some excellent, natural protection. Studies have indicated that Onion's quercetin content (a flavonoid and one category of antioxidant compounds) helps to inhibit low-density lipoprotein oxidation (an important

reaction in the atherosclerosis and coronary heart disease).

Further supporting healthy heart function and promoting healthy blood pressure levels, Onion is believed to reduce hypertension, according to the American Heart Association. The Prostaglandin-A in Onion is the anti-hypertensive factor thought to be helpful in controlling high blood pressure.

Onion helps to support healthy blood-sugar levels. The sulfur compound, allyl propyl disulphide, has been shown to block the breakdown of insulin by the liver and possibly to stimulate insulin production by the pancreas, thus increasing the amount of insulin and reducing sugar levels in the blood. In a 1976 report from the British medical journal, *Lancet*, it was noted that Onion (and garlic) are very hypoglycemic in nature and will lower blood sugar levels in diabetics - so much so, that people who already have low blood sugar levels should avoid Onion. Onion does not reduce blood sugar levels in healthy, nondiabetic people.

Onion has demonstrated immune-enhancing properties that work to counter harmful invaders that attack healthy cells. Flavonoid and sulfide compounds in the herb are potent antioxidants that have been known to help neutralize free radicals and the destructive, free radical or oxidative damage to tissues or cells. Scientists believe that some bacteria are risk factor in serious stomach conditions, and the sulfides appear to act against unhealthy bacteria that are considered risk factors in such ailments. In addition, the flavonoids are then thought to slow the growth of malignant cells. Onions contain quercetin, a flavonoid and one type of antioxidant compounds, which are thought to help delay or slow the oxidative damage to cells and tissue of the body, and studies have indicated that quercetin helps to eliminate free radicals in the body, to protect and regenerate vitamin E (a powerful antioxidant) and to inactivate the harmful effects of chelate metal ions. Recent studies completed at Johns Hopkins have indicated that compounds in

Onions (quercetin) may, in fact, help prevent colon cancer, and we have provided the direct link to bring you up to date on this recent science.

Onion is an excellent support for a healthy digestive system and works to combat gastric infection

and relieve intestinal gas, upset stomach and gastrointestinal pains. Consumption of Onion may prevent gastric ulcers by scavenging free radicals and by preventing growth of the ulcer-forming micro-organism, *Helicobacter pylori*. Onion's infection fighting properties will also help to expel intestinal parasites, and it has long been used as such in Amish folk medicine.

A recent study at the University of Bern in Switzerland showed that consumption of 1gram of dry Onion per day for four weeks increased bone mineral content in rats by more than seventeen percent and mineral density by more than thirteen percent, compared to animals fed a control diet.

This data suggests Onion consumption has the potential to decrease the incidence of osteoporosis. As an expectorant, Onion is said to effectively loosen and help rid the respiratory tract of phlegm and clear general catarrh. Onion is believed to relax people, and many claim that taking Onion will help provide a good night's sleep.

Contraindications:

Currently, there are no known warnings or contraindications with the use of Onion. However, because Onion is believed to lower blood sugar, people who are hypoglycemic should not take Onion without first consulting their health care providers. Moreover, because Onion may also have blood thinning properties, those who take blood thinners (Coumadin, warfarin, aspirin, etc.) should consult a physician before using.