

With the holidays coming, many people begin the annual battle of holiday goodies versus bodily health. It is true that at this time of year, many of us find ourselves inundated with fatty, sugary foods that we rationalize that since it *is* the holidays, and grandma made it special....and somehow after the fourth time we say that to ourselves, we switch to “I’m going on a diet/ I’m going to eat right - starting January 1st.” Luckily, there are many herbs in your kitchen that can help your digestive system survive the holidays.

Mustard is used in fatty dishes to help your body metabolize fats. Just add a pinch when making Mac and Cheese or lasagna.

Peppermint treats indigestion, nausea and flatulence. Amazingly, it also freshens bad breath.

Cayenne contains vitamins A, B Complex, C & K, as well as Zinc. It aids digestion and helps improve weak circulation.

Cumin is an old remedy for stomach ulcers. It is frequently found in tomato-based foods, like chili and salsas to neutralize the acid in tomatoes.

Easy cold weather Chili:

1 jar of Salsa (mild, medium or hot)

2 8oz. cans of Kidney beans

1 8 oz. can of Tomatoes

1 bottle of Beer

3 diced cloves of Garlic

1 tsp. Olive oil

1 pinch of Cumin

1 pinch of Mustard

Season with Cayenne to taste.

Garnish with cheese, serve with chips.

Drain beans in a strainer and rinse. In a pot combine all ingredients. Bring to a boil, then cover and reduce heat to simmer for 15 minutes. Season, Garnish and Serve!
Total time: 25 minutes, including prep. Serves 8.

This recipe includes ingredients that will help improve your digestion (Cumin, Mustard) settle your stomach (Olive Oil, Cumin), strengthen your immune system (Garlic, Onions from salsa, Cayenne) and drain your sinuses (Cayenne!).

May your stomach have as happy a holiday as you!

I would like to remind you that before making any life changes you should consult your physician and you should never consume anything you have a known or suspected allergy to. This column cannot and should not be substituted for medical advice.

Thank you & remember: Mom was right; your health IS in your kitchen.

Gwenyfar is the local author of *Your Health Is in Your Kitchen: Why Momma Made Chicken Soup*, available at Tidal Creek Co- op and online at Gwenyfar.com.

