Things to know about:
Ginger

- Ginger is the rhizome of the monocotyledonous perennial plant Zingiber officinale. The fresh ginger and ginger powder are widely used as a spice in cooking of seafood and meat. Ginger is routinely used in kitchen as a spice in China.

- Ginger contains about 3% of an essential oil. The essential oil gives the fragrance of ginger. The main constituents of the essential oil are sesquiterpenoids. (-)-zingiberene is the main component of sesquiterpenoids. The pungent taste of ginger is from nonvolatile phenylpropanoids and diarylheptanoids, of which gingerols, shogaols and zingerone are the major components.

- Ginger has been used to aid digestion and treat stomach upset, diarrhea, and nausea with a long history in folk medicine. Ginger is also used to treat the common cold, flu-like symptoms, headaches, and even painful menstrual periods in Traditional Chinese Medicine.

- Recent research shows that ginger extract is able to increase insulin level and decrease glucose level in diabetic rats. The extract also leads to a decrease in serum cholesterol, serum triglyceride, and blood pressure in the diabetic rats. Ginger also reduces LDL oxidation and significantly attenuates the development of atherosclerotic lesions in atherosclerotic, apolipoprotein E-deficient mice.

- Ginger also produces significant analgesic effects against nociceptive pain induced thermally or chemically in mice. Ginger inhibits fresh egg albumin-induced acute inflammation.

- Although these studies show that ginger has hypoglycemic, hypolipidemic, analgesic and anti-inflammatory properties. The study is preliminary and more carefully-designed experiments are required to elucidate the efficacy and mechanism of ginger activity.