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Ginger and garlic in food supplements

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Ginger (Zingiber officinale) and garlic (Allium sativum) have been used since time immemorial in our country as herbal food supplements, especially in the medical field of Ayurveda. They are known to be household medicines used to cure ailments, such as sore throat, indigestion, etc. Moreover, in the age of overuse of antibiotics and increasing antibacterial resistance, looking for a more natural option to improve immunity by fighting microbes is necessary. Allicin in freshly cut garlic has a variety of antimicrobial activities. In its pure form, it is known to exhibit antibacterial (against a wide range of Gram negative and Gram positive bacteria), antifungal, antiparasitic (against human parasites, such as Entamoeba histolytica) and antiviral activity. Likewise, gingerol found in ginger is known to have antimicrobial properties. Currently, the supplements of ginger and garlic are being sold at high prices, which makes it extremely unaffordable by the poor households rendering them with reduced immunity. Making such supplements affordable and accessible to them would indirectly improve the overall health of the country. Moreover, garlic and ginger are known to boost the functioning of the immune system, and reduce stomach and menstrual pain, common cold, blood pressure, osteoarthritis, nausea and vomiting in pregnant women, ageing process, and acne. These numerous therapeutic properties of two everyday spices are being neglected by our people; hence, they should be put into greater use. A supplement from these two medicinal foods (by verifying the minimum inhibitory concentration) could be formulated with empty gelatin or vegetarian capsules to bring a food supplement that is necessary, economical and beneficial to society in terms of nutrition. Formulations, such as dried powder, powder extracts and macerated oils, with different benefits and bioavailability, need to be marketed as affordable dietary supplements as they are potential beneficial constituents to human health.

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