



## Herbal Garden (Muligai Vanam)

### Ginger



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<b>Botanical Name</b>	:	<i>Zingiber officinale</i> Roscoe
<b>Tamil Name</b>	:	Inji
<b>Sanskrit Name</b>	:	Adraka
<b>English Name</b>	:	Ginger

#### Distribution and Habitat:

*Zingiber officinale* Roscoe, commonly known as ginger belongs to family, Zingiberaceae. The cultivation of ginger is known to originate in China which then spread to India, South East Asia, West Africa and the Caribbean. In India, it is cultivated in almost all the states. The plant has a perennial, tuberous root or rhizome; stem erect, oblique, round, invested by the smooth sheaths of leaves, 2 to 3 feet height.



Ginger grows from an aromatic tuber-like rhizome, warty and branched. Rhizomes, covered with brownish skin, pale yellow inside, branched irregularly, 7-15 cm long and 1-1.5 cm broad, spreading flat. The inflorescence grows on a separate stem from the leaf stem, and forms a dense spike, up to 3 inches tall. The bracts are green with translucent margins and the small flowers are yellow green with purple lips and cream coloured blotches.

**Parts used:** Rhizome

#### Phyto-chemical constituents:

Flavonoids, carbohydrates, proteins, alkaloids, glycosides, saponins, steroids, terpenoids, tannin, sesquiterpene hydrocarbons, zingiberene, farnesene, cineole, geranyl acetate, terphineol, terpenes, borneol, non-volatile pungent compound - gingerols, shogaols, paradols, zingerone, and waxes.

## Uses:

Ginger has been widely used as a spice in various food and beverages around the world. The plant has been developed in the medicinal industry as perfume and traditional herbal medicine. Tender ginger is eaten as fresh vegetables, processed into pickles. Ginger oil is also used as food-flavouring agent in soft drinks, as spices in bakery products, in confectionary items, and as preservatives in sauces.

## Medicinal uses:

Ancient records describe various medicinal properties of *Z. officinale* as a popular source to cure variety of disease conditions in various countries. The plant is used directly as an herb or as a main component for production of a number of medicines and food supplements for physical rejuvenation,



therapy for the conditions affecting liver, kidney, cardiovascular and immune systems. Ginger plays an important role in traditional Indian Ayurvedic medicine. Ginger is mixed with salt and consumed before food for indigestion. Dried ginger is made into a paste and applied externally to cure headache. Dried ginger mixed with honey is an effective remedy for cough and asthma. Onion juice mixed with ginger is given for nausea. To ease the congested uvula and tonsillitis, ginger is chewed (Sudhakar, 2007). Ginger has been reported for its biochemical and pharmacological activities such as anti-inflammatory, anti-apoptotic, anti-tumour activities, anti-pyretic, anti-platelet, antioxidant, anti-diabetic, anti-clotting and analgesic properties, cardio-tonic, cyto-toxic (Sivasothy et al. 2011). It has been widely used for arthritis, cramps, sprains, sore throat, rheumatism, muscular aches, pains, vomiting, constipation, indigestion, hypertension, dementia, fever and infectious diseases. Consumption of ginger also has beneficial effects on heart disease, cancer, hypertension, obesity, diabetes, osteoarthritis, and bacterial infections (Chen et al. 2019). Ginger is an easily available, low priced medication which is associated with low risk and can be substituted for chemical, scarce and expensive drugs.

**Photo link:** [https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Zingiber\\_officinale\\_230935597.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Zingiber_officinale_230935597.jpg)

