



Candy Canes A Christmas Tradition and Much More!

According to CandyHistory.net, candy canes were originally created over 350 years ago. It's long been believed that the now-famous crook shape came about in 1670, when a German choirmaster at the Cologne Cathedral bent the candy sugar sticks to make them look like shepherd's hooks. These candies were given out to children who attended church ceremonies, in an effort to bribe them to keep them quiet and well-behaved. This custom eventually spread across Europe and America and became popular.

Candy canes are one of those holiday treats that are hard not to love. In fact, demand is so high that [1.76 billion](#) are produced each year—with more than 90 percent sold in the month before Christmas. They're [the most popular non-chocolate candy](#) purchased during the holidays, and they're so iconic of the yuletide season that they've earned their own holiday, National Candy Cane Day, on December 26.

The best thing about candy canes, is that their original flavor – peppermint is tied to many health benefits. Peppermint is beneficial for treatment of:

- the [common cold](#), [cough](#),
- [inflammation](#) of the [mouth](#) and throat,
- [sinus](#) infections, and respiratory infections
- digestive problems including:
 - [heartburn](#)
 - [nausea/vomiting](#),
 - [morning sickness](#)
 - [irritable bowel syndrome](#) (IBS)
 - [cramps](#) of the upper gastrointestinal (GI) tract and bile ducts
 - [diarrhea](#)
 - bacterial overgrowth of the small intestine
 - menstrual problems
 - [liver](#) and [gallbladder](#) complaints
 - preventing spasms during endoscopy procedures



[Peppermint oil](#) is applied to the [skin](#) for headache, [muscle pain](#), [nerve pain](#), [toothache](#), inflammation of the [mouth](#), joint conditions, itchiness, allergic [rash](#), bacterial and [viral infections](#), relaxing the [colon](#) during barium enemas, and for repelling mosquitoes.

While we may not have candy canes with us year round, keep a supply of peppermint candies available and use these with your patients who may express many of the maladies listed above. Having the patients enjoy a candy cane or peppermint candy when they complain of nausea or having the sniffles may be just the thing to keep them participating in their rehabilitation programs.



Let's also take time ourselves to enjoy a candy cane or two as we celebrate the holiday season.
Happy Holidays to All!