Parsley, Sage, Rosemary, and Thyme. Some things we send home with you every week when we can as they are considered essentials in cooking and in health. This week I am quoting from the website whfoods.org: **Parsley:** Parsley's volatile oils—particularly myristicin—have been shown to inhibit tumor formation in animal studies, and particularly, tumor formation in the lungs. The activity of parsley's volatile oils qualifies it as a "chemoprotective" food, and in particular, a food that can help neutralize particular types of carcinogens (like the benzopyrenes that are part of cigarette smoke and charcoal grill smoke).

**Sage:** Increased intake of sage as a seasoning in food is recommended for persons with inflammatory conditions (like rheumatoid arthritis) as well as bronchial asthma, and atherosclerosis. The ability of sage to protect oils from oxidation has also led some companies to experiment with sage as a natural antioxidant additive to cooking oils that can extend shelf life and help avoid rancidity. **Rosemary:** contains substances that are useful for stimulating the immune system, increasing circulation, and improving digestion. Rosemary also contains anti-inflammatory compounds that may make it useful for reducing the severity of asthma attacks. In addition, rosemary has been shown to increase the blood flow to the head and brain, improving concentration. **Thyme:** has a long history of use in natural medicine in connection with chest and respiratory problems including coughs, bronchitis, and chest congestion. Volatile oils have also been shown to have antimicrobial activity against a host of different bacteria and fungi. For thousands of years, herbs and spices have been used to help preserve foods and protect them from microbial contamination, now research shows that both thyme and basil contain constituents that can both prevent contamination and decontaminate previously contaminated foods. In these studies, published in the February 2004 issue of *Food Microbiology*, researchers found that thyme essential oil was able to decontaminate lettuce inoculated with *Shigella*, an infectious organism that triggers diarrhea and may cause significant intestinal damage. Many thanks to whfoods.org for sharing this information!