

Nutrition

e-tips

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YOUR SOURCE TO RELIABLE HEALTH & NUTRITION INFORMATION

Antioxidant 'Superfoods'

Foods high in antioxidants are currently the super foods of choice - the magic foods that will give us health and long life. The best of them are found in the fruits and vegetables. That advice we've been hearing all our lives: "eat your vegetables," turns out to be good advice in the end. But what about some of these 'superfoods' we've been hearing about?

What are antioxidants? What are the benefits of antioxidants?

- Antioxidants are substances or nutrients in our foods that can prevent or slow the oxidative damage to our body. When our body cells use oxygen, they naturally produce free radicals (by-products), which can cause damage. Antioxidants act as "free radical scavengers" and hence prevent and repair damage done by these free radicals.
- Health problems such as heart disease, macular degeneration, diabetes, cancer etc are all contributed by oxidative damage. Antioxidants may also enhance immune defense and therefore lower the risk of cancer and infection.

Which foods are high in antioxidants?

Vitamins A& C:

- The brightly colored vegetables: leafy greens like kale and spinach (but not iceberg lettuce), other green vegetables like broccoli and Brussels sprouts, red and yellow vegetables like tomatoes, red bell peppers, carrots and squash, and other things like beets.
- The fruits with lots of color: pink grapefruit, berries, oranges, plums, grapes, apricots, peaches. Even the dried forms of these fruits are good sources.

Vitamin E:

- Nuts & seeds, whole grains, green leafy vegetables, vegetable oil and liver oil

Selenium:

- Fish & shellfish, red meat, grains, eggs, chicken and garlic

Other Common Antioxidants:

Flavonoids / Polyphenols

- soy
- red wine
- purple grapes or Concord grapes
- pomegranate
- cranberries
- tea

Lycopene

- Tomato and tomato products
- pink grapefruit
- watermelon

Lutein

- dark green vegetables; kale, spinach
- broccoli
- kiwi
- brussels sprouts

Lignan

- flax seed
- oatmeal
- barley
- rye

How much of these foods do we need each day?

- Minimum of 5 (up to 10) servings of fruits and vegetables a day, plus a variety of other antioxidant foods.

What foods/products are out there for people who don't eat enough fruit & vegetables?

If you're not getting enough of these foods in your diet, there are many antioxidant products and supplements available. Choose one from a reputable source and one that is produced from a range of plants and foods high in antioxidants, so you get a range of antioxidant molecules. You can also try some antioxidant superfoods such as, *Goji Berries* and *Acai Fruit*.

For more information, contact:



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