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Eating By Color: Red



Each color contains different nutrients, so a rainbow-colored plate of fruits and veggies is likely a well-rounded, healthy one! In this occasional series, we explain what each color has to offer. We told you all about orange foods, and this month, in honor of Valentine's Day and Heart Health month, we've got the scoop on red-hued eats.

What Red Foods Have To Offer

Red fruits and veggies are packed with a variety of powerful antioxidants that have been shown to help fight cancer and heart disease and reduce the risk of macular degeneration, a leading cause of blindness for older folks. Are these 9 red-hued fruits and veggies part of your diet?

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Peppers

Whether sweet or spicy, red peppers add a healthy punch. They're an excellent source of vitamin A, which helps with healthy skin, hair and bones. A sweet red pepper also contains more vitamin C than an orange! Chile peppers like red habanero and Serrano contain the phytochemical capsaicin, which has been shown to help reduce inflammation, relieve arthritis and headaches.

Cranberries

These red rubies are packed with vitamin C but also contain a ton of flavonoids like anthocyanins and proanthocyanidins, which have been shown to help fight a variety of cancers including breast, lung and colon. Homemade cranberry sauce and chutneys add amazing flavor to fish, pork and poultry dishes.

Pomegranate

This exotic fruit contains tons of polyphenols, antioxidants that have been linked to help prevent cancer and heart disease. Studies show that pomegranates contain three times more of this powerful antioxidant than both green tea and red wine!

Cherries

These red gems are packed with the antioxidants vitamins C and A and contain high amounts the antioxidants anthocyanin and quercetin, shown to help fight inflammation. Don't worry if they're not in season just yet— go for frozen or dried cherries instead.

Tomatoes

These vine-grown fruits are an excellent source of the antioxidants vitamins C and A and a good source of potassium, vitamin B6, folate and thiamin. Tomatoes have been a popular news topic because they contain the antioxidant lycopene, shown to help reduce the risk of heart disease and cancer. Studies also show that lycopene is more potent in cooked tomato produces like in ketchup and tomato sauce.

Red-Skinned Potatoes

These potatoes are medium in size and contain brownish-red skin. They have more moisture and less starch than the larger russet potato. They taste great boiled then bake or mashed. They also work well for roasting and frying.

Strawberries

Did you know that 1 serving of strawberries (about eight) contains more vitamin C than an orange? They've also been shown to help lower your bad (LDL) cholesterol and may also help fight cancer. Freeze strawberries while they're in season (or buy frozen, unsweetened berries at the grocery) so you can enjoy all their goodness all winter long.

Raspberries

These berries contain the plant compound anthocyanins, shown to help reduce inflammation and reduce the risk of diabetes and heart disease. They also contain quercetin which may help slow cancer growth. Blend frozen berries into smoothies, or try this salad with the fresh ones.

Watermelon

Composed of 92-percent water, a cool slice of watermelon is a perfect way to hydrate on a hot summer day. It's also packed with antioxidants like beta-carotene, vitamin C and lycopene a phytochemical shown to lower the risk of heart disease and cancer.

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