

August 2014 | preventdisease.com | Dr. Marianna Pochelli | Nutrition

20 Amazing Health Benefits of Tomatoes That Should Make Them A Daily Staple In Your Diet

Just one serving a day of tomato-based foods can have an incredibly beneficial effect on your health. Not only can they reduce heart disease, but they could potentially prevent and reverse dozens of diseases if eaten daily. This is one fruit you don't want to leave out of your diet.

1. REDUCE HEART DISEASE

According to Tufts and Boston University researchers, the highest average intakes of lycopene were linked to almost a 30% reduction in the incidence of cardiovascular disease and coronary heart disease, respectively, according to findings published in the British Journal of Nutrition.

2. VITAMIN AND MINERAL RICH

They provide the body with a tremendous amount of natural vitamins and minerals such as vitamin A, vitamin K, vitamins B1, B3, B5, B6, B7, excellent vitamin C, folate, iron, potassium, magnesium, chromium, choline, zinc, and phosphorus.

3. TOMATOES CAN REDUCE DAMAGE BY SMOKING INCLUDING SECOND HAND SMOKE

Tomatoes can reduce the amount of damage done to your body by smoking cigarettes or inhaling second hand smoke. Tomatoes contain coumaric acid and chlorogenic acid that work to protect the body from carcinogens that are produced from cigarette smoke.

4. THEY NATURALLY ENHANCE FLAVOR

Tomatoes can enhance the flavor of almost any cooked dish. Whole tomatoes, chopped tomatoes and tomato sauce freeze well for future use in cooked dishes. Cooking tomatoes -- such as in spaghetti sauce -- makes the fruit heart-healthier and boosts its cancer-fighting ability. All this, despite a loss of vitamin C during the cooking process, substantially raises the levels of beneficial phytochemicals. Research demonstrates that heat processing actually enhanced the nutritional value of tomatoes by increasing the lycopene content

5. DENSE IN PHYTONUTRIENTS

In terms of phytonutrients, few vegetables compare with tomatoes. They contain flavonones, flavonols, hydroxycinnamic acids, carotenoids, glycosides and even fatty acid derivatives. Better antioxidant protection has also been shown using broad measurements of oxidative stress in different body systems including neurodegenerative diseases.



READ MORE AT THE JUICE BAR

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NOTE: Some sentiments contained within "What We're Reading" articles may not strictly conform with PROJECT: PFC's nutritional outlook. We read articles containing opposing information all the time and derive our nutritional philosophies from the latest science, the opinions of experts worldwide and our anecdotal experiences in the field. We keep an open mind and a strong affinity for fact-based evidence to help make the world of nutrition "Simple Again" for you.

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6. ORGANIC TOMATOES ARE KING

Tomatoes grown by organic methods contain more phenolic compounds than those grown using commercial standards, but be sure of your source as many organic tomatoes imported from Mexico contained residues of pesticides exceeding allowable limits.

7. IMPROVES DIGESTION AND PREVENTS CONSTIPATION

They help to improve the functioning of the digestive system and the liver, and the prevention of constipation, especially when mixed with spinach juice.

8. REDUCES DANGERS OF STATIN DRUGS

Recent evidence just two ounces of tomato paste or a pint of juice a day could be enough to help many patient avoid dangerous statins the class of drugs commonly prescribed for these conditions which can lead to heart problems.

9. PREVENT KIDNEY AND GALL BLADDER STONES

They work as a disinfectant to protect the body from diarrhea and prevents the appearance of kidney stones and gall bladder stones in the long term. They also dramatically reduce the incidence of lower urinary tract symptoms.



10. HEALTHY HAIR

Drinking tomato juice constantly improves the appearance and texture of hair, and since it is rich in vitamin k, it helps to strengthen the tufts of hair and increase its luster as well as the revitalization of growth.

11. SKIN HEALTH

Rich tomato components fight acne and prevent damage to skin cells. Studies have indicated that eating two cups of tomato juice a day helps to improve the overall appearance of the skin in a short period of time.

12. BONE HEALTH

Tomatoes help maintain healthy bones strengthened by enhancing the ratio of calcium in the body. Interestingly, the connection of tomato intake to bone health involves the rich supply of antioxidant in tomatoes.

13. STRENGTHENS IMMUNE SYSTEM

9 Daily consumption of tomatoes is working to increase the proportion of vitamin C in the blood, which inhibits the levels of stress hormones and strengthens the immune system. So drinking tomato juice helps ease tension and stress.

14. REDUCE BLOOD CLOT RISKS

Tomato juice helps to reduce the risk of blood clots. The excessive clumping together of platelet cells can cause problems for our bloodstream in terms of blockage and unwanted clotting, and prevention of this excessive clumping is important for maintaining heart health. Numerous phytonutrients in tomatoes have been shown to help prevent excessive clumping of our platelet cells.

15. INCREASES FAT BURNING CAPACITY

Tomatoes stimulate the production of the amino acid carnitine which has been shown in research to speed the body's fat-burning capacity by over 30 percent.

16. PROTECTS VISION AND DEGENERATIVE EYE DISEASE

Because tomatoes are a rich source of the phytonutrients beta carotene, lutein, and zeaxanthin, they can help improve vision and protect your eyes from degeneration.

17. PREVENTS STROKE

New research in the journal Harvard Health Letter found that diets rich in tomatoes can help prevent stroke. The scientists chalk up the results to tomatoes' rich lycopene content.

18. RESTORES BIOCHEMICAL BALANCE IN DIABETICS

According to new research in the journal Cell Biochemistry and Biophysics, scientists created diabetic conditions in animals and fed some lycopene while others were fed their typical diet free of lycopene. The biochemistry of animals fed lycopene returned to normal while the others stayed at diabetic levels. This study shows promise that lycopene (found in tomatoes) can help restore biochemical balance in diabetics.

19. REDUCES PROSTATE CANCER RISK

Tomatoes are rich in natural fiber which maintains the health of the colon as it reduces the risk of prostate cancer which affects 1 in 8 men. One key tomato nutrient that has received special focus in prostate cancer prevention is alpha-tomatine. Alpha-tomatine is a saponin phytonutrient and it's shown the ability to alter metabolic activity in developing prostate cancer cells. It's also been shown to trigger programmed cell death (apoptosis) in prostate cancer cells that have already been fully formed. Research on alpha-tomatine has also been conducted for non-small cell lung cancer, with similar findings.

20. REDUCES BREAST CANCER RISK

Breast cancer can also be reduced with tomatoes. Exciting research in the Journal of the National Cancer Institute shows that higher amounts of carotenoids including alpha-carotene, beta-carotene, lutein, zeaxanthin, lycopene, and total carotenoids may have a reduced risk of breast cancer.

Tips for Preparing Tomatoes

Before serving, wash tomatoes under cool running water and pat dry.

If your recipe requires seeded tomatoes, cut the fruit in half horizontally and gently squeeze out the seeds and the juice. However, we encourage you to think about the recipe and consider whether the tomato could be incorporated with seeds intact. There are simply too many valuable nutrients in the seeds that you would not want to lose unnecessarily.

When cooking tomatoes, we recommend avoidance of aluminum cookware since the high acid content of the tomatoes may interact with the metal in the cookware. As a result, there may be migration of aluminum into the food, which may not only impart an unpleasant taste, but more importantly, may have a potentially unwanted impact on your health.

Whenever possible, try to develop recipes that make use of the whole tomato. We've seen research showing higher lycopene content in whole tomato products. For example, when the skins of tomatoes are included in the making of the tomato paste, the lycopene and beta-carotene content of the paste is significant higher according to research studies.

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