

Medicinal Benefits of Whole Foods

For the first 5000 years of civilization, humans relied on foods and herbs for medicine. Only in the past 50 years have we forgotten our medicinal "roots" in favour of patent medicines. While pharmaceuticals have their value, we should not forget the well-documented, non-toxic and inexpensive healing properties of whole foods. The following list is but a sampling of the health benefits from whole foods.

Apple. Lowers cholesterol and risk for cancer. Has mild antibacterial, anti-viral, anti-inflammatory estrogenic activity. High in fiber, helps avoid constipation, suppresses appetite. Juice can cause diarrhea in children.

Asparagus. A super source of the antioxidant glutathione, to lower cancer risk.

Avocado. Benefits circulation, lowers cholesterol, dilates blood vessels. It's main fat, monounsaturated oleic acid (also concentrated in olive oil), acts as an antioxidant to block artery-destroying toxicity of bad-type-LDL cholesterol. One of the richest sources of glutathione, a powerful antioxidant shown to block thirty different carcinogens and to block proliferation of the AIDS virus in test tube experiments.

Banana and Plantain. Soothes the stomach. Good for dyspepsia (upset stomach). Strengthens the stomach lining against acid and ulcers. Has antibiotic activity.

Barley. Long known as a "heart medicine" in the Middle East . Reduces cholesterol. Has anti-viral and anti-cancer activity. Contains potent antioxidants, including tocotrienols.

Beans. (legumes, including navy, black, kidney, pinto, soy beans and lentils). Potent medicine in lowering cholesterol. One-half cup of cooked beans daily reduces cholesterol an average 10 percent. Regulates blood sugar levels. An excellent food for diabetics. Linked to lower rates of certain cancers. Very high in fiber. A leading producer of intestinal gas in most people.

Beets. Richer than spinach in iron and other minerals. The greens are helpful in cases of anemia, tuberculosis, constipation, poor appetite, obesity, tumors, gout, pimples and helpful in the elimination of irritating drug poisons. Beets are one of the best foods to relieve constipation and they are also good for obesity.

Bell Pepper. Rich in antioxidant vitamin C. Helps to fight off colds, asthma, bronchitis, respiratory infections, cataracts, macular degeneration, angina, atherosclerosis and cancer.

Blueberry. Acts as an unusual type of antibiotic by blocking attachment of bacteria that cause urinary tract infections. Contains chemicals that curb diarrhea. Also has anti-viral activity and high in natural aspirin.

Broccoli. A unique package of versatile disease-fighters. Abundant in antioxidants, including quercetin, glutathione, beta carotene, indoles, vitamin C, lutein, glucarate, sulforaphane. Extremely high in cancer fighting activity, particularly against lung, colon and breast cancers. Like other cruciferous vegetables, it speeds up removal of estrogen from the body, helping suppress breast cancer. Rich in cholesterol-reducing fiber. Has anti-viral, anti-ulcer activity. A super source of chromium that helps regulate insulin and blood sugar. Note: cooking and processing destroys some of the antioxidants and anti-estrogenic agents, such as indoles and glutathione. Most protective when eaten raw or lightly cooked.

Brussels Sprouts. Cruciferous family possesses some of the same powers as broccoli and cabbage. Definitely anti-cancer, estrogenic and packed with various antioxidants and indoles.

Cabbage (including bok choy). Revered in ancient Rome as a cancer cure. Contains numerous anti-cancer and antioxidant compounds. Speeds up estrogen metabolism, is thought to help block breast cancer and suppress growth of polyps, a prelude to colon cancer. Eating cabbage more than once a week cut men's colon cancer odds 66 percent. As little as two daily tbsp. of cooked cabbage protected against stomach cancer. Contains anti-ulcer compounds; cabbage juice helps heal ulcers in humans. Has anti-bacterial and anti-viral powers. Can cause flatulence in some. Some of these important compounds are destroyed by cooking. Raw cabbage, as in cole slaw, appears to have stronger overall health value.

Carrot. A super source of beta carotene, a powerful anticancer, artery-protecting, immune-boosting, infection-fighting antioxidant with wide protective powers. A carrot a day slashed stroke rates in women by 68 percent. The beta-carotene in one medium carrot cuts lung cancer risk in half, even among formerly heavy smokers. High doses of beta carotene, as found in carrots, substantially reduces odds of degenerative eye diseases (cataracts and

macular degeneration as well as chest pain (angina). The high soluble fiber in carrots depresses blood cholesterol and promotes regularity. Cooking can make it easier for the body to absorb carrot's beta-carotene.

Cauliflower. Cruciferous family member that contains many of the same cancer-fighting, hormone-regulating compounds as its cousins, broccoli and cabbage. Specifically thought to help ward off breast and colon cancers. Eat raw, or lightly cooked.

Celery. A traditional Vietnamese remedy for high blood pressure. Celery compounds reduce blood pressure in animals. Comparable human dose: two to four stalks a day. Also has a mild diuretic effect. Contains eight different families of anti-cancer compounds, such as phthalides and polyacetylenes, that detoxify carcinogens, especially cigarette smoke. Eating celery before or after vigorous exercise can induce mild to serious allergic reactions in some.

Chili Pepper. Helps dissolve blood clots, opens up sinuses and air passages, breaks up mucus in the lungs, acts as an expectorant or decongestant, helps prevent bronchitis, emphysema and stomach ulcers. Most of chili pepper's pharmacological activity is credited to capsaicin (from the Latin "to bite"), the compound that makes the pepper taste hot. Also a potent painkiller, alleviating headaches when inhaled, and joint pain when injected. Hot paprika made from hot chili peppers is high in natural aspirin. Antibacterial, antioxidant activity. Putting hot chili sauce on food also speeds up metabolism, burning off calories. Chili peppers do not harm the stomach lining or promote ulcers.

Cinnamon . A strong stimulator of insulin activity, thus potentially helpful for those with Type 2 diabetes. Mild anti-coagulant activity.

Clove. Used to kill the pain of toothache and as an anti-inflammatory against rheumatic diseases. Has anti-coagulant effects, (anti-platelet aggregation), and its main ingredient, eugenol, is anti-inflammatory.

Coffee. Most, but not all, of coffee's pharmacological impact comes from its high concentration of caffeine a psychoactive drug. Caffeine, depending on an individual's biological makeup and peculiar sensitivity, can be a mood elevator and mental energizer. Improves mental performance in some. An emergency remedy for asthma. Dilates bronchial passages. Mildly addictive. Triggers headaches, anxiety and panic attacks in some. In excess, may cause psychiatric

disturbances. Promotes insomnia. Coffee stimulates stomach acid secretions (both caffeinated and decaf). Can aggravate heartburn. Promotes bowel movements in many, causes diarrhea in others. Caffeine may promote fibrocystic breast disease in some women.

Collard Greens. Full of anti-cancer, antioxidant compounds, including lutein, vitamin C and beta carotene. In animals, blocks the spread of breast cancer. Like other green leafy vegetables, associated with low rates of all cancers.

Corn. Anticancer and antiviral activity, possibly induced by corn's content of protease inhibitors. Has estrogen-boosting capabilities. A very common cause of food intolerance linked to symptoms of rheumatoid arthritis, irritable bowel syndrome, headaches and migraine-related epilepsy in children.

Cranberry. Strong antibiotic properties with unusual abilities to prevent infectious bacteria from sticking to the cells lining the bladder and urinary tract. Thus, it helps prevent recurring urinary tract (bladder) infections. Also has antiviral activity.

Cucumbers. Should be eaten freely by people who live on the desert or in other hot climates- the most cooling food. Indicated for fevers, constipation, skin eruptions, high blood pressure, rheumatism, obesity, acidosis and is a mild diuretic.

Date. High in natural aspirin. Has laxative effect. Dried fruits, including dates, are linked to lower rates of certain cancers, especially pancreatic cancer. Contains compounds that may cause headaches in susceptible individuals.

Eggplant. Eggplant substances, called glycoalkaloids, made into a topical cream medication have been used to treat skin cancers such as basal cell carcinoma, according to Australian researchers. Also, eating eggplant may lower blood cholesterol and help counteract some detrimental blood effects of fatty foods. Eggplant also has antibacterial and diuretic properties.

Fenugreek Seed. A spice common in the Middle East and available in many U.S. food markets. Has anti-diabetic powers. Helps control surges of blood sugar and insulin. Also anti-diarrheal, anti-ulcer, anti-diabetic, anti-cancer, tends to lower blood pressure, helps prevent intestinal gas.

Flax seeds and oil. Used primarily for constipation. In cases of gastritis, colitis or other inflammations of the digestive tract. Lowers blood fat levels often associated with heart attacks and strokes. Reduces harmful blood cholesterol levels with its soluble fibers. Prevents colon and breast cancer through its rich source of lignins, a documented anti-cancer agent. Improves moods, diminishes allergies and produces healthier skin.

Fig. Helps to prevent cancer. Both extract of figs and the fig compound, benzaldehyde, have helped shrink tumors in humans according to Japanese tests. Also laxative, anti-ulcer, antibacterial and antiparasitic powers. Triggers headaches in some people.

Fish and Fish Oil. An ounce a day has been shown to cut risk of heart attacks by 50 percent. The omega-3 oil in fish can relieve symptoms of rheumatoid arthritis, osteoarthritis, asthma, psoriasis, high blood pressure, Raynaud's disease, migraine headaches, ulcerative colitis and, possibly, multiple sclerosis. May help ward off strokes. A known anti-inflammatory agent and anti-coagulant. Raises good type HDL cholesterol. Lowers triglycerides. Guards against glucose intolerance and Type 11 diabetes. Some fish are high in antioxidants, such as selenium and Coenzyme Q-10. Exhibits anti-cancer activity especially in blocking development of colon cancer and spread of breast cancer. Fish highest in omega-3 fatty acids include sardines, mackerel, herring, salmon, tuna.

Ginger. Used to treat nausea, vomiting, headaches, chest congestion, cholera, colds, diarrhea, stomach ache, rheumatism, and nervous diseases. Ginger is a proven anti-nausea, anti-motion sickness remedy that matches or surpasses drugs such as Dramamine. Helps thwart and prevent migraine headaches and osteo-arthritis. Relieves symptoms of rheumatoid arthritis. Acts as an anti-thrombotic and anti-inflammatory agent in humans; is an antibiotic in test tubes (kills salmonella and staph bacteria), and an anti-ulcer agent in animals. Also, has anti-depressant, anti-diarrheal and strong antioxidant activity. High in anti-cancer activity.

Grape. Rich in antioxidant compounds. Red grapes (but not white or green grapes) are high in the antioxidant quercetin. Grape skins contain resveratrol, shown to inhibit blood-platelet clumping (and consequently, blood clot formation) and boost good-type HDL cholesterol. Red grapes are antibacterial and

antiviral in test tubes. Grape seed oil also raises good-type cholesterol.

Grapefruit. The pulp contains a unique pectin (in membranes and juice sacs-not in juice) that lowers blood cholesterol and reverses atherosclerosis (clogged arteries) in animals. Has anticancer activity, and appears particularly protective against stomach and pancreatic cancer. The juice is antiviral and high in various antioxidants, especially vitamin C.

Honey. Strong antibiotic properties. Has sleep-inducing, sedative and tranquilizing properties. Use sparingly as it is high in sugar.

Kale. Rich source of various anti-cancer chemicals. Has more beta carotene than spinach and twice as much lutein, the most of any vegetable tested. Kale is also a member of the cruciferous family, endowing it with anti-cancer indoles that help regulate estrogen and fight off colon cancer.

Kiwi Fruit. Commonly prescribed in Chinese traditional medicine to treat stomach and breast cancer. High in vitamin C.

Lecithin. Protects the nerves. Improves memory. May help thyroid and adrenal hypertension. Protects cells against damage by oxidation. Emulsifies fat in the blood.

Lemon. This citrus fruit ranks very high in its medicinal value, having many therapeutical uses. Lemon juice is a natural antiseptic which may be safely applied directly to cuts, bruises and infections. Lemon juice is good for asthma, headaches, pneumonia, and arthritis. It is a good general blood and body purifier and a mild diuretic. Do not take in cases of inflammations of the digestive tract. The juice also aids in the removal of old drug residues (poisons) from the body.

Licorice. Strong anti-cancer powers, possibly because of a high concentration of glycyrrhizin. Mice drinking glycyrrhizin dissolved in water have fewer skin cancers. Also kills bacteria, fights ulcers and diarrhea. May act as a diuretic. Too much licorice can raise blood pressure. Also it is not advised for pregnant women. Only real licorice has these powers. Licorice "candy" sold in the United States is made with anise instead of real licorice. Real licorice says "licorice mass." Imitation licorice is labeled "artificial licorice" or "anise."