

Top 10 Superfoods for a Healthier You!!

We hear a lot about foods to avoid, but let's explore foods to add to our diets that can make a real difference in our health. These ten **SUPERFOODS** are nutritional powerhouses adding vitamins, minerals, antioxidants, flavonoids, and more, not to mention rich flavor. Using a little culinary imagination add them to your favorite dishes or make them your new go-to snack.

1. MUSHROOMS are thick and hearty and full of phytochemicals which help fight disease as well as minerals that we often don't get enough of like potassium and copper.



2. LEMONS have more than 100% of your recommended daily vitamin C. It also helps increase your HDL or "good" Cholesterol levels. When you add some lemon to your green tea, it increases your body's ability to absorb the tea's antioxidants by 80%. Other fruits rich in vitamin C include cantaloupe, grapefruit, oranges and strawberries.



3. DARK CHOCOLATE, when consumed in moderate amounts, can do your body a world of good. It helps reduce blood pressure and LDL, or "bad" cholesterol levels. It's also chock full of antioxidants and flavonoids which help your body fight off infections and cancers.



4. WALNUTS are a wonderful source of omega-3 fatty acids, which lower your LDL, "bad", cholesterol, and raise HDL, "good", cholesterol. Omega-3s also help boost your mood, fight cancer, are a great source of protein, and are loaded with antioxidants. The FDA states that eating one ounce of nuts a day, including almonds, hazelnuts, peanuts, and pecans, can also reduce your risk of heart disease.



5. Whole Grain Pasta is a good source of fiber. It contains three times the amount of fiber as regular pasta. According to a Tufts University study, people who eat three or more servings of whole grains per day have a 30% lower risk of having metabolic syndrome, a condition that increases the risk of diabetes and heart disease. Whole grain pasta is truly a frugal, and healthy dinner addition.



6. Old-Fashioned or Steel-Cut Oatmeal is full of soluble fiber, which besides the benefits for your heart and cholesterol levels, makes you feel fuller longer. Eating oatmeal for breakfast means you're less likely to snack up until lunchtime, which can help cut calories out of your day.



7. Avocados are a delicious vegetable that is rich in healthy fats, and has been proved to lower your cholesterol by 22% when eaten on a regular basis. Avocados are also a rich source of fiber—one has more than half your daily fiber needs and 40% of your daily folate needs which can help lower your risk of heart disease.



8. Kale is a vegetable that is less popular, but is incredibly rich and flavorful. Kale is a nutritional powerhouse, low in calories, chock-full of fiber and loaded with calcium, iron, and vitamins A, C, and K. as well as a compound called indoles, which have been found to fight cancer.



9. Spinach is full of antioxidants, which helps boost your immune system, as well as one of the most effective vegetables for fighting cancer. Other vegetables rich in antioxidants include asparagus, broccoli, and cabbage.



10. Beans are incredibly good for you. Eating four servings of beans a week can lower your risk of heart disease and breast cancer by 22%. Beans are low in calories, high in fiber and full of antioxidants. Dark beans are better for you; they contain 40 times more antioxidants than white or light-colored beans.



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