

## **Meat and Cholesterol**

**Animal fat is a big cause of elevated cholesterol levels,** but not all meat is bad for you. Here are some tips to keep in mind when cooking and eating meats:

- Choose lean cuts of meat with minimal visible fat, and broil rather than fry the meat.
- When it comes to poultry, eat chicken or turkey rather than goose or duck, which are high in fat. Remove the skin before cooking, and if not before cooking, at least before eating.
- Limit processed meats, such as bologna, sausage, and hot dogs, because they're often high in fat and sodium.
- Organ meats of all kinds should be eaten only occasionally because they are extremely high in cholesterol.
- Eat two servings of fish a week, preferably an oily kind, such as salmon or trout.

Combined with exercise and other lifestyle changes, a healthy diet can do wonders for cholesterol levels. By incorporating these healthy-eating tips into your daily routine, you can reduce your cholesterol level and keep your weight in check.

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## Bell Peppers

Sweet peppers are delicious, crunchy, AND nutritious. Bell peppers are high in vitamin C and are a good source of other vitamins and minerals. In fact, just one bell pepper has 190% of the vitamin C our bodies need every day for good health. Now that's a lot of vitamin C. Red bell peppers are also high in vitamin A.

## Celery

Celery is a good source of vitamin C. In fact, just 2 stalks of celery has 15% of the vitamin C our bodies need every day for good health. Celery has other vitamins and minerals too. In fact, celery is also a good source of potassium. That's because one serving of celery has 10% of the potassium our bodies need every day for good health.

No wonder celery is such a popular vegetable - it's loaded with nutrients and low in calories.

## APPLES

Can you guess which has more fiber: an apple or a serving of oatmeal or most brands of cold cereal. If you guessed the apple, you're absolutely right. Just one medium apple has 5 grams of fiber while cereal has between 1-5 grams per serving. Apples are high in fiber. In fact, just 1 apple has 20% of the fiber our bodies need every day for good health. WOW - that's a lot of fiber

There's two kinds of fiber: soluble and insoluble. About 80% of the fiber found in apples is soluble and the rest is insoluble. Soluble fiber can help lower blood cholesterol and insoluble fiber may prevent certain types of cancer.

Fiber also helps our bodies with digestion and adds bulk to our diet. Like other fruits and vegetables, apples are low in calories and have no fat, cholesterol, or sodium. No wonder apples are so popular - they're healthy.

## Papaya

Besides being sweet and juicy with lots of flavor, papaya has a great nutrition story.

Papaya is high in vitamin C. In fact, just ½ of a papaya has 150% of the vitamin C our bodies need every day for good health. .

Papaya is also a good source of fiber. Just one serving of papaya has 10% of the fiber we need every day.

Papaya is a good source of folate. One-half of a papaya has 10% of the folate our bodies need every day for good health.

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### **An Apple A Day May Keep the Heart and Lung Specialists Away**

Researchers at the University of California Davis Medical School studied how eating apples and drinking apple juice every day affects heart disease risk. The 12-week study showed that by simply including apples in the diet (and without making any other dietary changes), study participants were able to reduce their risk of heart disease. Apples contain a variety of antioxidant phytochemicals that decrease LDL oxidation. Oxidized LDL cholesterol is more likely to build up in arteries, a process that can cause heart attacks and stroke.

Researchers from the University of Nottingham, located in the United Kingdom, recently reported that people who eat five or more apples a week have better lung function and lower risk of asthma and other respiratory disease compared to people who rarely eat apples. Their findings were based on a 10-year study involving 2,633 people examining relationships between diet and respiratory health. The researchers suspect that antioxidants in apples lead to these health benefits. In 1997 Finnish researchers reported that the antioxidant flavonoids may reduce the risk of lung cancer. The finding is based on a 25-year study examining relationships of diet/health in nearly 10,000 Finnish men.

### **Carotenoids and Cancer**

Carrots and other orange vegetables like squash and sweet potato and dark green vegetables like broccoli and spinach contain phytochemicals called carotenoids. The Nurses' Health Study showed that women who eat the most carotenoid-rich vegetables have the lowest risk of breast cancer. Researchers report that raw vegetables contain the highest amounts of carotenoids, which are damaged by the heat of cooking.

### **The Cruciferous Crusaders**

Cruciferous vegetables include bok choy, broccoli, brussels sprouts, cabbage, cauliflower, collard greens, rutabaga and turnips. Researchers from the Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center in Seattle reported in 2000 that men who eat at least 1.5 cups of cruciferous vegetables a week can reduce their prostate cancer risk by more than 40 percent. Researchers speculate that phytochemicals in cruciferous vegetables called isothiocyanates help the body produce enzymes that destroy cancer-causing compounds.

### **"Berry" Promising News**

In a study of 40 fruits and vegetables done at Tufts University in Boston, blueberries ranked number one in antioxidant content. Reported in 1999, a later study conducted at Tufts University in Boston reported that older rats fed blueberry extracts outperformed their study counterparts on balance, coordination and memory tests. Researchers believe that the antioxidants in blueberries are responsible for the benefits. While rats are not little humans, this study has prompted researchers to explore the effects of blueberries on the effects of aging in older humans. The National Institute on Aging is funding studies in humans. Results have not been released yet.

There are numerous studies that show that diets rich in fruits and vegetables help reduce the risk of stomach, lung, mouth, colon and esophageal cancer by as much as 30-40%.  
[http://www.dole5aday.com/ReferenceCenter/NutritionCenter/News/N\\_Home.jsp](http://www.dole5aday.com/ReferenceCenter/NutritionCenter/News/N_Home.jsp))



Bananas contain three natural sugars - sucrose, fructose and glucose - combined with fiber. A banana gives an instant, sustained and substantial boost of energy. Research has proved that just two bananas provide enough energy for a strenuous 90-minute workout. No wonder the banana is the number one fruit with the world's leading athletes.

A banana can help overcome or prevent a substantial number of illnesses and conditions, making it a must for our daily diet.

**Depression:** According to a recent survey undertaken by MIND among people suffering from depression, many felt much better after eating a banana. This is because bananas contain tryptophan, a type of protein that the body converts into serotonin, known to make you relax, improve your mood and generally make you feel happier.

**PMS: Forget the pills - eat a banana.** The vitamin B6 it contains regulates blood glucose levels, which can affect your mood.

**Anemia:** High in iron, bananas can stimulate the production of hemoglobin in the blood and so helps in cases of anemia.

**Blood Pressure:** This unique tropical fruit is extremely high in potassium yet low in salt, making it the perfect to beat blood pressure. So much so, the US Food and Drug Administration has just allowed the banana industry to make official claims for the fruit's ability to reduce the risk of blood pressure and stroke.

**Brain Power:** 200 students at a Twickenham (Middlesex) school were helped through their exams this year by eating bananas at breakfast, break, and lunch in a bid to boost their brain power. Research has shown that the potassium-packed fruit can assist learning by making pupils more alert.

**Constipation:** High in fiber, including bananas in the diet can help restore normal bowel action, helping to overcome the problem without resorting to laxatives.

**Hangovers:** One of the quickest ways of curing a hangover is to make a banana milkshake, sweetened with honey. The banana calms the stomach and, with the help of the honey, builds up depleted blood sugar levels, while the milk soothes and re-hydrates your system.

**Heartburn:** Bananas have a natural antacid effect in the body, so if you suffer from heartburn, try eating a banana for soothing relief.

**Morning Sickness:** Snacking on bananas between meals helps to keep blood sugar levels up and avoid morning sickness.

**Mosquito bites:** Before reaching for the insect bite cream, try rubbing the affected area with the inside of a banana skin. Many people find it amazingly successful at reducing swelling and irritation.

**Nerves:** Bananas are high in B vitamins that help calm the nervous system.

**Overweight and at work:** Studies at the Institute of Psychology in Austria found pressure at work leads to gorging on comfort food like chocolate and crisps. Looking at 5,000 hospital patients, researchers found the most obese were more likely to be in high-pressure jobs. The report concluded that, to avoid panic-induced food cravings, we need to control our blood sugar levels by snacking on high carbohydrate foods every two hours to keep levels steady.

**Ulcers:** The banana is used as the dietary food against intestinal disorders because of its soft texture and smoothness. It is the only raw fruit that can be eaten without distress in over-chronic ulcer cases. It also neutralizes over-acidity and reduces irritation by coating the lining of the stomach.

**Temperature control:** Many other cultures see bananas as a "cooling" fruit that can lower both the physical and emotional temperature of expectant mothers. In Thailand, for example, pregnant women eat bananas to ensure their baby is born with a cool temperature.

**Seasonal Affective Disorder (SAD):** Bananas can help SAD sufferers because they contain the natural mood enhancer, tryptophan.

**Smoking:** Bananas can also help people trying to give up smoking. The B6, B12 they contain, as well as the potassium and magnesium found in them, help the body recover from the effects of nicotine withdrawal.

**Stress:** Potassium is a vital mineral, which helps normalize the heartbeat, sends oxygen to the brain and regulates your body's water balance. When we are stressed, our metabolic rate rises, thereby reducing our potassium levels. These can be re-balanced with the help of a high-potassium banana snack.

**Strokes:** According to research in "The New England Journal of Medicine", eating bananas as part of a regular diet can cut the risk of death by strokes by as much as 40%"

## CARROTS

Carrots are an excellent source of antioxidant compounds, and the richest vegetable source of the pro-vitamin A carotenoids. Carrots' antioxidant compounds help protect against cardiovascular disease and cancer and also promote good vision, especially night vision.

When six epidemiological studies that looked at the association of diets high in carotenoids and heart disease were reviewed, the research demonstrated that high-carotenoid diets are associated with a reduced risk of heart disease. In one study that examined the diets of 1,300 elderly persons in Massachusetts, those who had at least one serving of carrots and/or squash each day had a 60% reduction in their risk of heart attacks compared to those who ate less than one serving of these carotenoid-rich foods per day.

Beta-carotene helps to protect vision, especially night vision. After beta-carotene is converted to vitamin A in the liver, it travels to the retina where it is transformed into rhodopsin, a purple pigment that is necessary for night-vision. Plus beta-carotene's powerful antioxidant actions help provide protection against macular degeneration and the development of senile cataracts, the leading cause of blindness in the elderly.

Carrots are by far one of the richest source of carotenoids—just one cup provides 16,679 IUs of beta-carotene and 3,432 REs (retinol equivalents), or roughly 686.3% the RDA for vitamin A. High carotenoid intake has been linked with a 20% decrease in postmenopausal breast cancer and an up to 50% decrease in the incidence of cancers of the bladder, cervix, prostate, colon, larynx, and esophagus. Extensive human studies suggest that a diet including as little as one carrot per day could conceivably cut the rate of lung cancer in half.

### Broccoli

## Avocados

Cut one open and you'll taste why avocados have entranced diners since emerging from Central America thousands of years ago. Satiny, silky, sensuous, smooth -- all the adjectives that avocado growers and promoters use for the homely fruit apply. Indeed, avocados are sort of like a creamy dairy product that grows on trees. They contain a surprising amount of fat -- about 15 grams per half -- but fortunately almost all of that is the monounsaturated fat (the same kind found in olive oil) that is thought to be good for the heart. They're also loaded with potassium, fiber and disease-fighting nutrients. Known for their deliciously rich flavor, California avocados are also rich in phytochemicals -- natural plant nutrients that help protect against a variety of cancers and diseases. .... Research shows that avocados rank highest in the following phytochemicals and nutrients among the 20 most frequently consumed fruits:

- Lutein -- protects against prostate cancer and eye disease such as cataracts and macular degeneration.
- Vitamin E -- a powerful antioxidant known to slow the aging process and protect against heart disease and various forms of cancer.
- Glutathione -- functions as an antioxidant like vitamin E to neutralize free radicals that can cause cell damage and lead to disease.
- Beta-sitosterol -- lowers blood cholesterol levels. Avocados contain four times as much beta-sitosterol as oranges, previously reported as the highest fruit source of this phytochemical.
- Monounsaturated fats -- heart-healthy fats proven to help lower LDL (bad) cholesterol and boost HDL (good) cholesterol.
- Folate -- promotes healthy cell and tissue development. Folate is especially important for woman of childbearing age as it helps protect against birth defects.
- Potassium -- helps balance the body's electrolytes. Avocados contain 60 percent more potassium than bananas.
- Magnesium -- helps produce energy and is important for muscle contraction and relaxation.
- Fiber -- lowers cholesterol and reduces risk of heart attack.

Many people are surprised to learn that avocados are a fruit. They love the taste of avocados but do not realize they are so rich in nutrients and phytochemicals. The avocado's unique nutrient profile makes them a stand out among commonly eaten fruits.

<http://nutrcoach2.com/avocado.aspx>

## Mangos

Mangos really can make you feel better! Beyond being delicious and rich in vitamins, minerals and anti-oxidants, mangos contain an enzyme with stomach soothing properties similar to papain found in papayas. These comforting enzymes act as a digestive aid and can be held partially responsible for that feeling of contentment.

Mango, both in its green and ripe form is a very good tenderizing agent due to these same enzymes, therefore ideal to include in any marinade. In India they use a sour mango powder containing ground up green mangos called Amchur, both as a seasoning and tenderizing aid.

We all know the importance of fiber in our diets. Mangos are high in fiber, but low in calories (approx. 110 per average sized mango). Research has shown that dietary fiber has a protective effect against degenerative diseases, especially with regards to the heart; may help prevent certain types of cancer, as well as lowering blood cholesterol levels. An average sized mango can contain up to 40% of your daily fiber requirement. For those of you who are physically active, whether working out or constantly on the go, mangos are also a great way to replenish that lost potassium and are rich in anti-oxidants, potassium and fiber.

Mangos are an excellent source of Vitamins A and C, as well as a good source of Potassium and contain beta carotene. <http://nutrcoach2.com/Mangos.aspx>

## **Pineapples**

**Pineapples are nutritionally packed members of the bromeliad family. This delightful tropical fruit is high in the enzyme bromelain and the antioxidant vitamin C, both of which play a major role in the body's healing process.**

**Bromelain is a natural anti-inflammatory that has many health benefits and encourages healing. According to Dr. Andrew Weil, bromelain is very effective in treating bruises, sprains and strains by reducing swelling, tenderness and pain. This powerful anti-inflammatory effect can also help relieve rheumatoid arthritis symptoms and reduce postoperative swelling. Additionally, the bromelain contained in fresh pineapple can relieve indigestion. This enzyme helps break down the amino acid bonds in proteins, which promotes good digestion.**

**Pineapples provide an ample supply of vitamin C too, a commonly known antioxidant that protects the body from free radical damage and boosts the immune system. Vitamin C helps build and repair bodily tissue and promotes wound healing. The body uses vitamin C to help metabolize fats and cholesterol, absorb iron, and synthesize amino acids and collagen. Collagen is one of the primary building blocks of skin, cartilage and bones. Vitamin C also decreases the severity of colds and infections.**

**Furthermore, due to its high vitamin C content, pineapples are good for your oral health as well. A study conducted at the State University of New York at Buffalo found that vitamin C can reduce your risk of gingivitis and periodontal disease. Besides increasing the ability of connective tissue to repair itself, vitamin C also increases the body's ability to fight invading bacteria and other toxins that contribute to gum disease. Periodontal disease, which destroys gum tissue and underlying jaw bones, has been linked to heart disease, stroke and type 2 diabetes.**

**So if you want a natural way to enhance your body's healing mechanisms, promote overall good health and tantalize your taste buds, pineapples are the way to go. Choose the fresh fruit because it has the most healing properties. Unfortunately, most of the bromelain in canned pineapple is destroyed due to the heat used in the canning process.**

**<http://nutricoach2.com/Pineapple.aspx>**



### Strawberries

Two separate studies presented at the 2003 American Dietetic Association Food and Nutrition Conference and Exhibition reveal that in addition to being low in fat and calories, strawberries are naturally high in fiber, vitamin C, folate, potassium and antioxidants, making them a sweet alternative that advances heart health, reduces the risk of certain types of cancer, and gives a boost to total body wellness.

Dr. Gene Spiller, Nutrition and Health Research Center, recently released data showing that when people eat a daily serving of strawberries (about 8 berries; 45 calories) there are significant increases in blood folate levels and decreases in systolic blood pressure, findings that amplify the importance of including strawberries as part of a heart-healthy diet. Strawberries' propensity to decrease systolic blood pressure may reduce the risk of heart disease associated with high blood pressure. Folate reduces levels of homocysteine, an amino acid which may at high levels block arteries. In addition, earlier findings showed that strawberries are high in antioxidants such as ellagic acid and anthocyanins, the red pigment in strawberries, which is further evidence that strawberries provide an edge for heart health.

A second study released by Dr. Victor Fulgoni, Nutrition Impact LLC, further validates these findings and reveals additional benefits. Like Dr. Spiller's findings, Dr. Fulgoni's research using large surveys created by the US government showed that compared to non-eaters, strawberry eaters have higher blood folate levels and lower levels of homocysteine and tend to have lower blood pressure. In addition, Dr. Fulgoni's data revealed that strawberry eaters tend to have higher dietary fiber, folate, potassium and vitamin C intake.

"The body of evidence showing a health benefit of strawberries continues to grow," said Dr. Fulgoni. "This latest research demonstrates that people who eat strawberries may be benefiting from their many nutrients, which may help maintain a healthy heart." In addition to advancing heart health and reducing risks of certain types of cancer, strawberries have been shown previously to enhance memory function and aid in the management of rheumatoid arthritis.

While long-term health benefits are compelling, for some, the immediate reward is equally fulfilling. A nutrient dense fruit, strawberries also have the added benefit of great taste while being high in fiber. Their versatility and adaptability add interest, lively color and flavor to either indulgent or healthy recipes. Fresh, frozen or dried, eaten alone or tossed into cereal, salads or yogurt, strawberries naturally add a nutritional edge to an ordinary meal or snack

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### Tomatoes

Tomatoes are loved for their fresh taste and the versatile role they play in cooking. But research indicates there may be another reason to love them — they're loaded with lycopene (LY-ko-pene).

Lycopene is a plant chemical (phytochemical) that gives tomatoes their red color. It also appears to offer potential health benefits.

Tomatoes contain many nutrients, among them vitamins C and B complex and the minerals iron and potassium. Also in the mix are carotenoids (kuh-ROT-uh-noids). These include lycopene and beta-carotene, which are converted into vitamin A by your body.

Lycopene gets high marks from researchers for its apparently potent antioxidant properties. Antioxidants are thought to neutralize harmful substances in the body called free radicals. These molecules, which result from normal cell metabolism as well as other causes, may increase your risk of cancer and cardiovascular disease.

Fresh tomatoes are loaded with lycopene, but cooking tomatoes makes lycopene easier for your body to use. For instance, your body will absorb five times more lycopene through tomato sauce than through an equivalent amount of fresh tomatoes. Evidently, heat breaks down tomato cell walls to free lycopene that otherwise would pass through your digestive system.

<http://nutricsach2.com/Tomatoes.aspx>

## Squash

Winter squash, unlike its summer equivalent, can be harvested very late into the fall, has a longer storage potential, and still provides an outstanding variety of conventional nutrients. Winter squash emerged from our food ranking system as an excellent source of vitamin A (in the form of beta-carotene), a very good source of vitamin C, potassium, dietary fiber and manganese. In addition, winter squash emerged as a good source of folate, omega-3 fatty acids, vitamin B1, copper, vitamin B6, niacin-vitamin B3 and pantothenic acid. How does this amazing array of nutrients support our health? One of the most abundant nutrients in squash, beta-carotene, has been shown to have very powerful antioxidant and anti-inflammatory properties. Beta-carotene is able to prevent the oxidation of cholesterol in the body. Since oxidized cholesterol is the type that builds up in blood vessel walls and contributes to the risk of heart attack and stroke, getting extra beta-carotene in the diet may help to prevent the progression of atherosclerosis. It may also protect against diabetic heart disease and may be useful for preventing other complications caused by free-radicals often seen in long-term diabetes. Additionally, intake of foods such as squash that are rich in carotenoids may be beneficial to blood sugar regulation. Research has suggested that physiological levels, as well as dietary intake, of carotenoids may be inversely associated with insulin resistance and high blood sugar levels. Studies have also shown that a good intake of beta-carotene can help to reduce the risk of colon cancer, possibly by protecting colon cells from the damaging effects of cancer-causing chemicals. Finally, beta-carotene's anti-inflammatory effects may help to reduce the severity of conditions like asthma, osteoarthritis, and rheumatoid arthritis, which all involve inflammation. Other nutrients found in squash are also useful for a number of different conditions. The potassium in squash may help to lower blood pressure, and the vitamin C may be able to reduce the severity of conditions like asthma, osteoarthritis, and rheumatoid arthritis and also to prevent the progression of conditions like atherosclerosis and diabetic heart disease. Fiber to Fight Heart Disease and Colon Cancer In addition to its ability to lower high cholesterol levels, which reduces the risk of heart disease, the fiber found in squash is also able to prevent cancer-causing chemicals from attacking colon cells. This is one of the reasons why diets high in fiber-rich foods have been associated with a reduced risk of colon cancer. The fiber found in vegetables has also been shown to alleviate the uncomfortable symptoms of diarrhea and constipation in patients suffering from irritable bowel syndrome. <http://nutricoach2.com/Squash.aspx>

## Citrus fruits

Citrus fruits have long been valued as part of a nutritious and tasty diet. The favors provided by citrus are among the most preferred in the world, and it is increasingly evident that citrus not only tastes good, but is also good for people. It is well established that citrus and citrus products are a rich source of vitamins, minerals and dietary fiber (non-starch polysaccharides) that are essential for normal growth and development and overall nutritional well-being. However, it is now beginning to be appreciated that these and other biologically active, non-nutrient compounds found in citrus and other plants (phytochemicals) can also help to reduce the risk of many chronic diseases.

Citrus is most commonly thought of as a good source of vitamin C. However, like most other whole foods, citrus fruits also contain an impressive list of other essential nutrients, including both glycemic and non-glycemic carbohydrate (sugars and fiber), potassium, folate, calcium, thiamin, niacin, vitamin B6, phosphorus, magnesium, copper, riboflavin, pantothenic acid and a variety of phytochemicals. In addition, citrus contains no fat or sodium and, being a plant food, no cholesterol. The average energy value of fresh citrus is also low, which can be very important for consumers concerned about putting on excess body weight. For example a medium orange contains 60 to 80 kcal, a grapefruit 90 kcal and a tablespoon (15 ml) of lemon juice only 4 kcal (Whitney and Rolfes, 1999).

There is considerable evidence that citrus foods may help reduce the risk, or retard the progression, of several serious diseases and disorders.

- **Cardiovascular disease** It is well accepted that a diet low in saturated fat and cholesterol and rich in fruits and vegetables reduces the risk of heart disease. Epidemiological studies have also shown a significant association between vitamin C intake and protection against cardiovascular mortality, but the precise mechanism of protection is still unclear. One major culprit in the development of heart disease appears to be a high level of oxidized low-density lipoprotein (LDL), the so-called bad cholesterol. Significantly, a recent study has shown that high intakes of vitamin C (500 mg/day) obtained from the juice of freshly squeezed oranges, prevented a rise in the levels of oxidized LDL, even in the presence of a high-saturated fat diet (Harats et al., 1998).

A low dietary intake of folate contributes to the decrease of plasma folate and the raising of plasma homocysteine levels (Bloom, 1998, Tucker et al., 1996). Homocysteine is a toxic agent for the vascular wall and, when plasma levels rise above normal, there is an increased risk of cardiovascular disease. An inverse dose-response relationship has been identified for fruit and vegetable intake and plasma homocysteine levels. Frequent consumption of folate-rich foods, such as oranges and orange juice, tends to increase plasma folate levels and, thus, lower homocysteine levels.

- **Cancer** After numerous studies of fruit and vegetable intake and cancer development, there is a consensus that consuming these foods has a protective effect (Block, Patterson and Sabat, 1992). However, it is unlikely that one anticarcinogenic substance in particular is responsible for the benefit. There is reasonable scientific support for vitamin C's protective role in cancer. Many of the animal, cell culture and human studies have suggested it has a positive effect. However, epidemiological studies provide good evidence that protective effects are more closely associated with the consumption of fruits and vegetables rather than with the enormous levels of vitamin C often used in cell culture and animal studies.

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