



POWER FOODS

For Daily Health and Vitality

BY 365 DAILY HEALTH

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| | |
|---|-----------|
| Disclaimer | 5 |
| Introduction..... | 6 |
| Health Benefits of Apple Cider Vinegar | 7 |
| Soothe Coughs and Sore Throats | 8 |
| Relieve Indigestion and Heartburn | 8 |
| Improve Energy | 8 |
| Health Benefits of Apples..... | 10 |
| Promotes Better Satiety | 10 |
| Reduces Blood Fats | 11 |
| Improves Gut Health | 11 |
| Improves Brain Health..... | 11 |
| Lowers Cancer Risk..... | 12 |
| Health Benefits of Avocados | 13 |
| Healthy Cholesterol Levels – Avocados Contain Monounsaturated Fats | 13 |
| Prevent Heart Disease and Cancer – Avocados Contain Carotenoids | 14 |
| Protect Against Constipation and Colon Cancer – Avocados Contain Fiber .. | 15 |
| Boost Your Immune System – Avocados Contain Vitamin E | 15 |
| Health Benefits of Bananas | 16 |
| Lowers blood pressure | 16 |
| Prevents heart disease | 16 |
| Strengthens the bones | 17 |
| Prevents stomach problems..... | 17 |
| Health Benefits of Beets..... | 19 |
| Beets help detox the body | 19 |

| | |
|---|-----------|
| Beets help lessen tumor cell growth | 19 |
| Beets protect the heart..... | 20 |
| Beets help stabilize blood sugar levels | 20 |
| Beets help prevent osteoporosis..... | 21 |
| Beets help ensure a healthy pregnancy..... | 21 |
| Health Benefits of Fiber-Rich Foods..... | 22 |
| The Two Fiber Types | 22 |
| Insoluble Fiber | 23 |
| Soluble Fiber | 24 |
| Health Benefits of Garlic | 26 |
| Garlic lowers cholesterol levels..... | 27 |
| Garlic for fungal infections..... | 27 |
| Garlic for colds and immunity | 27 |
| Garlic for heart health..... | 27 |
| Health Benefits of Ginger | 29 |
| Ginger Eases Morning Sickness | 29 |
| Ginger Relieves Motion Sickness..... | 30 |
| Ginger Provides Relief from Inflammation | 30 |
| Ginger Assists With Weight Control | 30 |
| Ginger Helps Eliminate Cancer Cells..... | 30 |
| Health Benefits of Green Vegetables..... | 32 |
| Natural Detoxifier and Deodorizer | 32 |
| Healthy PH Levels..... | 33 |
| Intestinal Balance..... | 33 |
| Better Eye Health | 34 |
| Health Benefits of Spices..... | 35 |
| Curcumin..... | 35 |
| Ginger | 36 |
| Basil | 36 |

Rosemary 36
Garlic..... 37
Nutmeg 37
Conclusion38

Disclaimer

We hope you enjoy reading our E-Book however we do suggest you read our disclaimer. All the material written in this E-Book is provided for informational purposes only and is general in nature.

Every person is a unique individual and what has worked for some or even many may not work for you. Any information perceived as advice by must be considered in light of your own particular set of circumstances.

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Introduction

It should go without saying that some foods are better than others for our health and vitality. Some are so bad that they should be classified as poison rather than food. However, some food types are no less than super-foods.

The benefits of these foods have been passed through generations and sought after for their medicinal, tonic and all round health support. As they are all grown as or derived from naturally growing plants, no person or entity has managed to put a patent on them.

Many wish they could as their health benefits outweigh many commercial substitutes, but without both excessive cost and side effects. The following chapters list some of these wonderful foods as well as their uses.

Health Benefits of Apple Cider Vinegar

Apple cider vinegar is considered by many people to be one of the best natural health tonics available. It has so many health benefits it would be impossible to list them all! People use it to ward off cold and flu viruses, for weight loss, skin disorders, bacterial infections and much more.



When you buy, make sure you do get ‘apple cider’ vinegar, and not white or malt vinegar, as these are a totally different product. Also check that the apple cider vinegar you buy is unpasteurized. Pasteurization will render many of the active properties inert, which means you will not get the benefits you are wanting. Whether the product is pasteurized or not will be stated somewhere on the label.

The unpasteurized product, which is the one you want, will very likely and preferably have some dark brown fiber-like webbing or ‘mother of vinegar’ suspended in it. While it may appear unsightly, it is very good to see and attests to the vinegar being unpasteurized and whole.

Here are a few of the health benefits that apple cider vinegar or ACV can provide.

Soothe Coughs and Sore Throats

Apple cider vinegar is often used to soothe sore throats and coughs. If you begin to feel any throat irritation, you can drink or gargle some ACV. The apple cider vinegar helps to balance your pH levels and it helps to kill any bacteria in your throat.

To make a gargle, mix ¼ cup of ACV to ¼ cup of warm water then gargle every hour.

As ACV is a natural expectorant, instead of taking cough medicines you can take a natural health tonic such as ACV and help remove the phlegm by expectorating.

You may like to add honey to your vinegar for a few other benefits too. As well as making the taste more pleasant honey is great for easing coughs, reducing infections and soothing sore throats.

Relieve Indigestion and Heartburn

Apple cider vinegar can prevent indigestion and relieve heartburn pain. To avoid indigestion, take 1 tablespoon of ACV with warm water 30 minutes before you eat and if you are already suffering with heartburn pain, take the same dose as needed.

You may be asking the question, 'How can apple cider vinegar relive heartburn when it is the acid in the stomach rising up into the esophagus that is causing the problem to begin with?' The answer is that the ACV neutralizes the acid and makes the stomach content more alkaline as it balances out your pH levels.

Try it next time you have heartburn and see how it works quickly and efficiently.

Improve Energy

Stress, exercise and daily commitments can cause fatigue. This is due in part to the accumulation of lactic acid in the body and lactic acid causes fatigue.

The amino acid present in apple cider vinegar can help you with improving your energy levels, so take a teaspoon of ACV when fatigue hits. The enzymes and the potassium also help to relieve fatigue at the end of a stressful day.

There are many more health benefits of apple cider vinegar and there are books available listing the many hundreds of wonderful uses!

So as you can see, apple cider vinegar has plenty to offer in terms of natural healing solutions. It is well worth keeping this health tonic in your cupboard and taking a teaspoon or two daily to reap its benefits.

Remember to buy the bottle with the web in it! That way you will truly experience its healing properties.

Health Benefits of Apples

Apples are among the most widely cultivated fruits in the world. It is also the same fruit that is mentioned in one of the world's most famous phrases, 'An apple a day keeps the doctor away.'

The reason this statement is repeated so often is because it is true. Below are some of the benefits that you can get from eating an apple a day.



Promotes Better Satiety

Eating apples demands a lot of chewing and when you spend time chewing you are sending signals to your brain telling you that you have had enough to eat. The result of this impulse is to reduce the likelihood of bingeing on other foods, which could end up being less healthy calorie-rich foods.

Apples contain natural sugar that gradually enters the bloodstream, which helps keep blood sugar and insulin levels stable. This is the same reason why eating

apples instead of sugar-laden processed foods will help you avoid experiencing the nasty effects of a sugar rush and subsequent sugar crash that can then cause further food cravings.

Reduces Blood Fats

Eating apples has been shown to help reduce blood fats. Studies conducted on the effects of eating apples showed that pectin is helpful for its fat lowering effects. Also, the combination of fiber and phytonutrients helps reduce the risk of cardiovascular diseases, as this combination helps prevent the oxidation of LDL cholesterol in the blood.

Improves Gut Health

A study conducted at the New Zealand Institute for Plant and Food Research Limited showed that the polyphenol-content of apples can help influence the bacterial population in the gut, resulting in reduced levels of inflammation and improved gastrointestinal health.

Improves Brain Health

Apple and its natural juice are known to help protect the brain's nerve cells against inflammation as well as oxidative stress. These factors contribute to deteriorating cognitive performance and as such is commonly associated with aging.

Another reason why apples help improve brain health is that they contain antioxidants that reduce the number of free radicals in the body, some of which can cause damage to the central nervous system.

A study conducted on people with Alzheimer's showed that consuming 8 ounces of apple juice for one month helped improve the participants' psychotic and behavioral symptoms.

Another factor that contributes to the improvement and prevention of Alzheimer's disease is the ability of apples to increase the levels of neurotransmitter acetylcholine which is known to be responsible for improving memory.

Numerous studies have shown that high levels of acetylcholine in the brain can help prevent the onset of mental decline. Additionally, the antioxidant quercetin works well in protecting the brain against the adverse effects of neurotoxicity.

Lowers Cancer Risk

Another study revealed that a high consumption of apples can help prevent cancer. The study followed almost 10,000 cancer-free people for several decades and their findings indicated that those who had the highest consumption of apples and other flavonoid-rich foods, were able to reduce their risks of cancer by up to 20%.

However, flavonoids are not the only cancer-fighting compounds that apples have. They also contain a specific form of complex carbohydrate known as oligosaccharides which are known to help induce cancer cell death.

As you can see, eating an apple a day may be just what the doctor ordered!

Health Benefits of Avocados

Avocados have been called the world's most perfect food as they contain most of the nutrients that we need in order to survive. They not only taste delicious but they provide many health benefits due to these powerful pre-loaded nutrients.

In some countries, avocados are called alligator pears and are in the top food list for brain health. However, avocados do more than just protect our brain. They are a high fiber packed food and are also sodium free. Here are some other great benefits of eating avocados.



Healthy Cholesterol Levels – Avocados Contain Monounsaturated Fats

Studies have shown that eating avocados is good for your cholesterol. A study revealed that those men and women who consumed one avocado every day were within one week found to have lower total cholesterol levels of up to 17%.

This lowering of cholesterol levels is caused by a reduction in the LDL or bad cholesterol and triglycerides. In turn, the HDL or good cholesterol levels increased due to avocado consumption.

This is important to note! Your HDL cholesterol levels are an important part of your cholesterol count and higher is better!

Experts attribute this occurrence to the monounsaturated fat content of avocados. Avocados contain a specific type of monounsaturated fat known as 'oleic acid' that acts in activating the part of the brain that tells you, you are full.

This is one of the reasons why avocados promote satiety much better than the type of fats found in highly processed foods.

Additionally, its healthy fat content was also found to be beneficial for promoting better absorption and efficient use of carotenoids.

Prevent Heart Disease and Cancer – Avocados Contain Carotenoids

Avocados contain both well-known and not so well-known carotenoids such as alpha-carotene, beta-carotene, lutein, neoxanthin, beta-cryptoxanthin, violaxanthin, zeaxanthin and neochrome. Research shows that carotenoids are powerful antioxidants that are important for the prevention of heart diseases and cancer.

Carotenoids also help enhance the ability of the immune system to fight against infections. Some of these carotenoids in avocados serve as precursors of vitamin A which helps inhibit free radical formation and its adverse effects. This helps to protect individuals from arthritis and prevent the progression of cancer.

A study which was published in the Journal of Nutritional Biochemistry further demonstrated the ability of carotenoids to fight against cancer. In the study, scientists exposed prostate cancer cells to the groups of carotenoids extracted from avocados. The results showed that such exposure inhibited the growth and replication of cancer cells.

Protect Against Constipation and Colon Cancer – Avocados Contain Fiber

Avocados are also loaded with soluble and insoluble fibers. Not many foods contain both types of fiber. Insoluble fiber helps ensure efficient bowel movements.

Therefore, an individual is protected from bouts of constipation while also reducing the risk of developing colorectal cancer. On the other hand, its soluble fiber content is what makes you feel fuller longer. This is what makes avocados a helpful diet addition to weight management.

Boost Your Immune System – Avocados Contain Vitamin E

One piece of avocado has approximately 4.16 milligrams of vitamin E known as alpha-tocopherol. Studies reveal that alpha-tocopherol is the most active form of vitamin E that is known to help boost the immune system. In addition, it helps reduce inflammation, prevents cholesterol oxidation, prevents the formation of eye cataracts and protects an individual against cognitive decline.

Health Benefits of Bananas

Bananas are creamy, sweet and are certainly good for us. Athletes love them as they provide plenty of energy when needed most! They are well-known for their potassium content, but what else are bananas good for? Here are a few reasons to add them to your grocery list.

Lowers blood pressure

The potassium content of bananas is essential for keeping your blood pressure within normal levels. This is very important for maintaining a healthy cardiovascular system. An average sized banana contains 467 mg of potassium, which as a daily amount is considered enough to protect you from the dangers of atherosclerosis.

Several studies have shown that eating bananas and other potassium rich foods are effective in lowering blood pressure. A group of researchers were tasked with monitoring thousands of American male health professionals for four years. More than 40,000 participants were monitored in order to determine how one's daily diet impacts their blood pressure levels.

The results concluded that those who follow a potassium-rich diet and eat foods that are also rich in magnesium and fiber were found to have lowered risks of stroke.

Prevents heart disease

Bananas are not only rich sources of potassium; they are also full of fiber which helps prevent and alleviate many symptoms of heart disease.

Another study published in the Archives of Internal Medicine revealed that those who eat plenty of fiber-rich foods, such as bananas, have a significantly lowered risk of coronary heart disease, by as much as 12%.

Therefore eating a banana a day can help reduce your chances of heart disease.

Strengthens the bones

The potassium content of bananas is also beneficial for keeping the bones healthy and strong. The potassium helps prevent the fast-thinning of bones by protecting them against urinary calcium loss, which occurs to people who eat a high-sodium diet.



Prevents stomach problems

Bananas also provide antacid effects that help protect people from ulcers. Another study proved that mixing banana and milk can suppress acid secretion in the stomach. The protective effects of bananas work in two ways.

First, bananas contain active substances that allow proper functioning of the cells found in the stomach lining in order for them to produce a thick mucus barrier that prevents excessive stomach acid secretion.

The second protective effect of bananas is made possible through the help of *protease inhibitors* that are helpful in eradicating ulcer-causing bacteria inside the stomach.

Those who suffer from diarrhea may also find eating bananas very beneficial. Diarrhea can cause a rapid loss of electrolytes but eating bananas will help you to replenish those lost electrolytes. Potassium functions as one very important electrolyte that not only regulates heart function but also helps an individual maintain fluid balance in the body.

Another protective effect of bananas come from its soluble fiber called pectin which plays a role in normalizing the movement through the digestive tract to provide relief from constipation.

Keep in mind that consuming fruits such as bananas are one integral part of a healthy, balanced diet. This must be coupled with exercise and other healthy lifestyle habits for you to fully achieve optimal health.

Health Benefits of Beets

Beets are full of nutrients and especially a phytonutrient called betanin. Betanin is a phytonutrient that is helpful for inflammation and detoxification, plus it is an antioxidant. Beets contain vitamin C, magnesium and vitamin B folate. They are also full of fiber, so as you can see, beets are a very healthy food to add to your diet.

Here are a few more good reasons for including beets in your diet.

Beets help detox the body

One of the most outstanding qualities of beets is its ability to help the body's betaine stay intact. The liver cells need betaine for getting rid of toxins. Betaine not only protects the bile ducts but it helps ensure that the liver is functioning properly by thinning the bile, thereby allowing it to flow easily to the liver and all the way to the small intestine.

Thereby, the body is ridding itself of toxins more easily and 'detoxing' the body in the process.

Beets help lessen tumor cell growth

Studies conducted on tumor cells showed that betanin pigments have the ability to lessen the growth of tumor cells which is done by inhibiting pro-inflammatory enzymes.

The studies were conducted on many types of tumor cells such as those that grow in the stomach, nerves, lungs, testicles, prostate and breasts. Although more research is still needed, experts are already looking at the possibility that the betanin content of beets can be beneficial for preventing and treating different types of cancer.



Beets protect the heart

A study conducted back in 2000 showed that the fiber content of beets works effectively in increasing the levels of good HDL cholesterol levels while lowering bad LDL cholesterol levels. Additionally, the fiber in beets helps reduce cholesterol plaques by as much as 30% and prevents the plaques from building up in the aorta.

Beets contain flavonoids and carotenoids which help prevent bad cholesterols from being oxidized and left in the arteries to form plaques.

Beets help stabilize blood sugar levels

Beets have low calories and zero fats and are a low GI food. This means that beets can be converted into sugar in a steady, usable manner thus preventing sugar spikes and keeping blood sugar levels stable.

Beets help prevent osteoporosis

As mentioned earlier, beets contain magnesium which is important for building healthy bones and preventing bone loss. Magnesium plays a crucial role in regulating calcium levels in the body. Other bone building nutrients that are found in beets include vitamin C, copper and manganese.

Vitamin C is necessary for the production of collagen that helps maintain healthy cartilage and bones while manganese is needed for the synthesis of those connective tissues found in bones and cartilage.

Copper serves as an active enzyme in the production of tissue proteins, elastin and collagen. All these are essential for bone development and maintenance.

Beets help ensure a healthy pregnancy

Beets are rich sources of vitamins A, B and C. They also serve as powerhouses of phosphorous, fiber, potassium, beta-cyanine, magnesium, iron and folic acid.

These are just some of the reasons why pregnant women should include beets in their diet. Beets contain nutrients that are crucial for the development of new growth cells and a woman's needs for iron alone doubles when she is pregnant.

Therefore, eating beets helps ensure that the hemoglobin carries oxygen to the placenta and other parts of the body.

An added benefit of beets is that you can eat its roots, stems and leaves which are all packed with vitamins and minerals. You don't just use a part of it, you can use the whole lot!

You can find many delicious recipes on how to prepare and cook beets for health.

Health Benefits of Fiber-Rich Foods

While we are continually told that we need to eat fiber-rich foods, many of us are not completely aware of what the real health benefits of foods that contain fiber are. It would also be fair to say that many people do not know that there are two types of fiber - soluble and insoluble fiber – and what the differences are.

One reason for this is that most of those nutritional labels we see in food products do not indicate if it is soluble or insoluble fiber. So if the food label only says ‘fiber’ how would you know?

You need to become your own nutrition expert and know which foods will give you the best source of soluble or insoluble fiber and why you need to include them in your diet.

Fiber is almost similar to sugars and starches due to its carbohydrate makeup. However, the type of carbohydrates that fiber contains, the human body cannot digest, while carbohydrates found in starches and sugars can be digested.

However, although our body cannot digest the carbohydrate found in fiber, it helps our system digest other foods and keeps our entire digestive system functioning at its best.

The Two Fiber Types

There are two types of fiber which act differently in our bodies and both are essential to digestive health.

Soluble fiber can be dissolved in water and insoluble fiber, as the name implies, cannot be dissolved in water.

Insoluble Fiber



Insoluble fiber can be obtained from bran, nuts, seeds and other whole wheat foods. It helps in the formation of the waste mass that passes through the bowels and helps prevent the occurrence of constipation and diarrhea. Additionally, because insoluble fiber is solid it allows the forming stool to stay compact. This enables the stool to move easily into the intestines.

Insoluble fiber also works like a scrub that scrapes the walls of the digestive tract as it passes through. As the insoluble fiber scrapes, it will accumulate waste particles so these can be moved out of the body.

Soluble Fiber

Soluble fiber can be obtained from vegetables, flax seeds and fruits. Soluble fiber functions in a different manner to insoluble fiber. It becomes gel-like and thickens the contents when incorporated with the liquids in the body.

Soluble fiber is helpful for hydrating the stool, thereby allowing it to move smoothly into the intestines. It also helps prevent any digestive problems as it makes the digestive contents into a watery, slurry mixture. This slurry mixture slows down its absorption into the small intestines.

This is why if you eat foods containing soluble fiber, you feel fuller longer. This is also why a soluble fiber rich food is considered to be an important inclusion in a weight-loss diet plan.



Studies show that those who eat more soluble fiber will be able to reduce their food intake by as much as 11%. An increased soluble fiber intake has the added benefits of balancing the levels of blood glucose and lowering levels of cholesterol.

Now that you understand how wonderful the health benefits of a fiber-rich diet are, resist the urge to suddenly increase your fiber intake. Make sure to increase your fiber intake in a slow and steady manner.

Why? The reason is, you will be giving your body time to adjust to any increase in the amount of non-digestible material from the fiber-rich foods you are beginning to eat and you won't feel any discomfort.

Health Benefits of Garlic

Garlic is one of nature's little miracles in a bulb. It is a natural antibiotic. You may love or hate the taste or smell, but the medicinal advantages of garlic cannot be denied. The positive benefits outweigh all the negatives!

Garlic also contains vitamins and minerals and is one of the top nutritional foods that our body needs. It has vitamin B1, B6, and vitamin C. It also contains copper, tryptophan, potassium, and selenium. Garlic belongs to the Allium family, just like the onion.

Eating raw garlic gives greater health benefits than when cooking or frying garlic, as excess heat destroys the enzymes which provide its antibiotic properties. Overcooked garlic can actually cause an upset stomach, so don't overcook or burn your garlic when sautéing.



Here are a few of the health benefits of eating garlic.

Garlic lowers cholesterol levels

If a person's diet is filled with fast foods that are high in saturated fats and sugars, it can lead to high LDL cholesterol levels. Studies show that garlic can help lower high cholesterol levels, especially the dangerous LDL type.

As it is important to keep your cholesterol levels in a healthy range, eating some garlic every day makes good dietary sense. Add it to your evening meal where possible and if you and your partner can agree to - eat a raw clove every day for maximum benefit.

Garlic for fungal infections

Garlic contains substances that both fight off fungal infections and prevents them from recurring. An overgrowth of candida can cause unwanted yeast infections and eating garlic can keep the bad bacteria and good bacteria in balance.

Garlic for colds and immunity

Garlic boosts the immune system and prevents the onset of a cold or flu. If you feel a cold coming on, eat more garlic! Even though the common cold is not a life-threatening disease, a cold can really disrupt our daily activities, especially if it comes with a headache and cough. Many people rely heavily on garlic in the wintertime, either raw or in tablet and capsule form.

Garlic for heart health

Garlic helps fight against heart disease. We all want and need a strong healthy heart. Studies show that garlic plays its part in slowing down the hardening of our arteries. One study showed that taking 900mg standardized garlic powder every day slowed down atherosclerotic growth.

Garlic is also known to be an anticoagulant. This means garlic acts as a natural blood thinner. Blood thinning agents and medications are prescribed for the prevention of heart attacks and stroke as they prevent the blood from thickening.

Eating garlic will help keep your blood flowing naturally.

Garlic for detoxing

Eating a clove of garlic a day helps the body release toxins and protects the liver at the same time. The liver is the second largest organ of the body and one of its major roles is to detoxify our body. Eating garlic helps your liver to do its vital work.

There are many more health benefits that garlic can bring.

As stated earlier, garlic is a natural antibiotic, but don't blindly substitute your medicine with garlic, always check with your health care provider. Whilst garlic is an excellent broad-spectrum antibiotic, there are antibiotics that are specifically recommended to fight serious problems or infections.

However, garlic is the best option for fighting a cold which is caused by a bacteria or virus. Are you going to eat some garlic today?

Health Benefits of Ginger

Ginger is most recognized and sought after for its strong unique flavor. However, aside from its distinct taste and uses in many cuisines, scientists have discovered many notable health benefits of ginger.

Eastern cultures especially have used ginger as a natural remedy for various ailments throughout their history, so it comes as no surprise that modern researchers have conducted studies on how and why ginger can be so beneficial to human health.



Ginger Eases Morning Sickness

Many women have relied on ginger as an important remedy for relieving morning sickness. If you are pregnant and feeling nauseas, you can take ginger to help stop the queasiness. Ginger can be eaten in its raw form or it is often combined with other ingredients in over-the-counter preparations.

Ginger helps with nausea and vomiting even if you are not pregnant too.

Ginger Relieves Motion Sickness

Have you ever been driving and felt car sick? If so chewing on some ginger can certainly help. Ginger is a recognized and effective remedy for motion sickness.

Ginger settles the stomach and is also used for many other digestive problems including colic, diarrhea and gas.

Ginger Provides Relief from Inflammation

Inflammation is a major cause of pain, both chronic and acute. Ginger has properties which act to impede the prostaglandins from causing inflammation.

The anti-inflammatory action of ginger reduces the inflammation that subsequently causes the pain.

Specifically, it can be helpful in relieving migraines or arthritis. Chinese medical practitioners have also recommended ginger tea for treating menstrual cramps.

Ginger Assists With Weight Control

Ginger is beneficial in increasing your metabolism. Ginger contains nutritional properties that actually makes you feel fuller too, so it stimulates your metabolism while at the same time helping you eat less. Ginger therefore is an excellent addition to your weight loss diet.

Ginger Helps Eliminate Cancer Cells

Although there is more research to be done, some studies have identified the benefits of ginger in the elimination of cancer cells. It contains 6-gingerol which is a substance that may be beneficial in the protection against cancer.

In addition, some studies have found that regularly taking ginger powder has induced cancer cell death. So although not conclusive, anyone with cancer can consider eating ginger as part of their dietary therapy. However, before you assume

this is a prevention or even part of a cure, you should seek the advice of your attending physician, to make sure it won't conflict with any of your prescribed medications.

As you can see, ginger is more than just an ingredient to add flavor to your food, although it is certainly excellent for this. Its numerous health benefits have provided many people a natural and safe way to treat many ailments and pain.



Health Benefits of Green Vegetables

As children we may have screwed our nose up at having to eat our so-called healthy green vegetables. Our parents would tell us how good they were for us and we do the same with our own children. However, even though they tell it, many parents don't really know why they are good for us! Simply because they were told that too, so it has been passed on through the generations that eating our broccoli and peas will make us healthy.

It's now time to look at why it's so worth eating your green vegetables and understanding the benefits for your health.



Natural Detoxifier and Deodorizer

Green leafy vegetables are rich sources of chlorophyll which serves as one of the body's detoxifiers. Chlorophyll plays a part in ensuring that enough oxygen is being delivered by the blood to all the different cells in the body. It is also involved in the neutralization of free radicals which helps prevent damage to the cells.

Individuals who have bad breath or suffer with other body odors will benefit from eating plenty of green leafy vegetables as the chlorophyll serves as a natural deodorizer.

Eating raw or only lightly cooked greens will help to obtain as much chlorophyll as possible from the vegetable. Also, the darker the leaves, the more chlorophyll the veggies contain.

Healthy PH Levels

For your body to function optimally it needs to maintain the correct pH balance. Sometimes the body can be too acidic or too alkaline. The type of diet that many people have these days tends to lean towards eating foods that induce the production of too much acid.

Examples of these foods may include some meats, refined grains, artificial sweeteners, pasteurized dairy, processed sugar and a lot of fatty foods. When these acid-forming foods are being ingested on a regular basis, one can no longer expect their immune system to be functioning at a healthy level.

This is because these acid-forming foods can turn your body into a breeding ground for illnesses which may range from the common cold to heart disease or even cancer.

Keeping your pH level within an acceptable range can significantly help you achieve and maintain your best possible health. This can be greatly assisted by eating alkaline-forming foods such as turnip greens, spinach, Swiss chard, kale and broccoli.

Alkaline forming foods will help create the right environment within your body that is necessary for your immune system to be in peak condition.

Intestinal Balance

A study revealed that the T-bet gene inside our body responds actively when green leafy vegetables are consumed. The T-bet gene plays a crucial role in the production of critical immune cells inside the gut.

These immune cells, which are also referred to as ILCs or Innate Lymphoid Cells, reside in the lining of the digestive system and work to protect the body against the invasion of bad bacteria in the intestine.

This assists in the prevention of inflammatory diseases, food allergies, obesity and bowel cancer.



Better Eye Health

Dark green leafy vegetables contain carotenoids such as lutein and zeaxanthin that are found in concentrated amounts in the eye lens and in the macular region of the retina. Regular consumption of dark green leafy veggies can help prevent the occurrence of age-related macular degeneration and cataracts.

There are also studies which showed that lutein and zeaxanthin can help reduce the risk of lung cancer and breast cancer.

So far, from being an old wives' tale handed down from generation to generation, green leafy vegetables are very good for you, so make sure you pass it on!

Health Benefits of Spices

Doctors and nutritionists agree that the spice rack in your kitchen can also serve as a part of your medicine cupboard. Research shows that the spices we use in our daily cooking can greatly help us in the treatment and prevention of different illnesses which may range from the common cold to cancer.



Here are just a few herbs and spices and some of their specific benefits.

Curcumin

Have you ever wondered why India has a lower rate of cancer compared to other countries? This is due partly to the fact that curcumin is part of their normal daily diet. Researchers have found that curcumin has the ability to identify normal cells and cancerous cells, then act to induce apoptosis that forces the cancer cells to self-destruct. That certainly makes curcumin a beneficial spice to add to your cooking.

Ginger

Ginger has been used in Chinese traditional medicine for thousands of years in treating nausea. The anti-nausea properties found in ginger are said to have the capability to turn off the nerve receptors which triggers the vomiting.

Pregnant women who were asked to take 1 gram of ginger daily for four days were found to experience more relief from morning sickness and vomiting, compared to those women who only took a placebo.

Basil

Many naturopathic doctors prescribe basil for treating different respiratory disorders.

Boil some basil leaves in 2 quarts of water mixed with honey and ginger. Let it boil until only about one half of the water remains. Allow it to settle first before drinking. Drink the same mixture when treating bronchitis, coughs, asthma, influenza and colds.

Basil leaves have cinnamamic acid that helps improve breathing and enhance blood circulation and is helpful for people suffering from respiratory disorders.

Rosemary

Rosemary contains carnosic acid which is known to be beneficial for the brain. This particular acid helps protect the brain from free radical damage. Although much research is still needed to completely understand the full benefits of carnosic acid for the brain, initial findings show that carnosic acid plays a role in protecting the hippocampus from beta-amyloid accumulation.

Beta-amyloid refers to toxic protein fragments which if left in the brain to accumulate can lead to plaques that may contribute to the development of Alzheimer's disease.

Garlic

Garlic contains active compounds which have a unique way of affecting the smooth muscles located in the arteries. Garlic reduces blood pressure levels by helping the arteries to relax and dilate. In addition, researchers have also confirmed that garlic is more effective than many mainstream pharmaceutical antibiotics when it comes to fighting against bacteria that cause many stomach-related illnesses.

Nutmeg

Nutmeg contains eugenol which is a compound that benefits the heart. It is also known to contain many vitamins and minerals such as magnesium, copper, calcium, manganese, potassium and B complex vitamins. However, nutmeg is more popular for its brain tonic compounds which make it beneficial for people who are suffering from depression, anxiety and also for those people who want to improve their concentration.

So the next time you add some spice to your favorite dish, don't just consider its taste or aroma. Think about how each spice can boost your health and know that this is one important step towards mindful eating.



Conclusion

From reading the above it is easy to gain an understanding of how earlier generations, who ate many of these foods as a matter of course, were healthy, fit and strong, without the need for constant doctor's visits. Their food was truly their medicine.

There is no good reason why most of cannot make these foods a staple part of our diets also. Unfortunately we have been lured away by the temptation of processed 'fast foods'.



The foods documented here are almost all fruits and vegetables. While this does not mean that our whole diet need consist of vegetarian fare, it would be to most peoples benefit to increase their vegetable intake, with a focus on the super-foods discussed above. Healthy eating!