

Avocados

-high in carotenoids (vit A family), which usually require a little fat for better absorption but this has healthy fat built right in! This means, when you eat avocado with tomato, carrots, leafy greens, you will increase absorption of carotenoids from these foods! An added bonus is that it actually helps convert the beta-carotene into active vitamin A

-higher levels of monounsaturated fats (comparable to olives) help to lower risk of heart disease, lower blood LDL, lower levels of oxidative stress. Other fats, called phytosterols, provides anti-inflammatory benefits to our cardiovascular system.

-Avocados can help control our blood sugars through a special sugar found in avocados, named mannoheptulose, which unlike most sugars, will help suppress insulin secretion.

-Avocados have a high fiber content (up to 10g per 1 cup of avocado), vitamin K, vitamin E, all B vits (except B12), 20% of our daily vitamin C in 1 cup of avocado; Phosphorous, Manganese, Copper, and omega 3 FAs.

Black Beans

High in resistant starch- low on glycemic index. Good for diabetes. Resistant starches also increase short chain fatty acids, good for overall gut health and lowers gut inflammation

15 g fiber per 1 cup serving.

High in flavonoids; can help lower blood fatty acid levels

High in Zinc; as much as a 4oz serving of Turkey or shrimp

Recommended amount is 3 cups weekly for vegetarians

Buckwheat

-Cardiovascular benefits: the Yi people of China who eat a diet high in buckwheat (3.5oz/day) were found to have lower total serum CHOL, lower LDL, high HDL to total cholesterol ratio. High in Flavenoids (antioxidants that help maintain blood flow and preventing excessive clotting of platelets). High in Magnesium, which helps relax blood vessels, which improve blood flow and lower blood pressure.

-Blood sugar: when compared to regular wheat flour, buckwheat groats added while breadmaking significantly reduced blood sugar & insulin responses while buckwheat also caused high satiety/hunger satisfaction. In a 6yr study of 36K women in Iowa, they found that eating an average of 3 daily servings of whole grains had a 21% lower risk of diabetes compared to those who didn't. This is likely due to the chiroinositol within buckwheat that acts like insulin and makes cells more sensitive to insulin

-whole grains, such as buckwheat, are high in plant lignans, which are converted by bacterial flora of our intestines into mammalian lignans, such as enterolactone, which has been shown to protect against hormone-dependent cancers like breast & uterine cancer as well as heart disease. Nuts, seeds, berries, vegetables and fruits are other rich sources of plant lignans.

-heart failure risk reduction: Heart failure is the leading cause of hospitalization in elderly Americans. When relying only on medications such as ACE-i and beta blockers, follow up of 2445 discharged hospital

pts with heart failure revealed that 37% die during 1st year of discharge and 78.5% died within 5 yrs. Harvard researchers followed 21.4K pts with heart failure over 19.6yrs and after adjusting for all other factors, found that a daily morning bowl of whole grain cereal (not refined from grocery store) had a 29% lower risk of heart failure.

-Buckwheat is a complete protein with all essential amino acids (like tofu)

-Buckwheat can be safely eaten by those with celiac disease or gluten intolerant.

Cabbage

Linked to lower risk of diabetes and decreased risk of cardiovascular disease. High in antioxidants

Second most economical cooked vegetable

High in Sinigrin good for cancer prevention (bladder, colon and prostate)

Red cabbage has polyphenols (antioxidant and anti-inflammatory properties), high in vitamin K, C, B6

Can help decrease total cholesterol and LDL and oxidized LDL levels

Cilantro

-known well in Europe as an “anti-diabetic” plant as it helps stimulate insulin secretion & lower blood sugar.

-known well in India as anti-inflammatory, as when given to rats, coriander or cilantro reduced the amount of damaged fats in cell membranes.

-known in American studies as anti-CHOL, lowering LDL and raising HDL levels

-Most recently, studies from US & Mexico have found to be antimicrobial as well. A compound in cilantro, called dodecanal, is twice as effective as the antibiotic Gentamicin at killing Salmonella. As studies ensued, 8 more antibiotic compounds have since been isolated from fresh cilantro.

-Coriander has been used since 5000BC, making it one of the world’s oldest spices. Hippocrates used coriander for its medicinal properties (Hippocrates = Father of Medicine, said “Let food be thy medicine.”)

Cumin

Good source of Iron

Has cancer protective properties via antioxidant effects

Jackfruit

-antibacterial, antifungal, antidiabetic, anti-inflammatory, antioxidant

-K lowers blood pressure; B6 helps reduce homocysteine levels (elevated levels can damage lining of vessels); vit C helps protect skin; Flavenoids help inhibit release of cytokines from mast cells, neutrophils, macrophages; phytonutrients like lignans & isoflavones help prevent cancer cells from forming and has been found to be effective to prevent or treat lymphoma; Niacin necessary for energy metabolism, nerve function & synthesis of certain hormones; magnesium helps in Ca absorption; high in iron & copper;

multiple compounds within jackfruit help in fever, boils, wounds, skin diseases, seizures, ophthalmic disorders, snake bites = bacterial AND fungal.

Lentils

High in fiber, both soluble and insoluble

Soluble fiber Helps in lowering cholesterol since binds cholesterol in the gut. Also helps to stabilize blood sugars

Insoluble increases stool bulk and helps with constipation

Consumption of legumes linked to an 82% reduction of cardiac death

High in folate for homocysteine reduction

High in magnesium (natures calcium channel blocker)

Pinto Beans

-those who ate more legumes had an 82% decreased heart attack risk

-folate (lowers homocysteine), magnesium (helps vessels to relax; studies show that mag deficiency not only associated w/ MI, but the lack of mag promotes free radical injury to heart); pinto beans (1 cup) has 746mg K but only 1.7mg Na; contains 246% daily requirement for molybdenum, which helps to detoxify sulfites; Mn & Cu – strong antioxidants but Cu also in collagen & elastin in connective tissue like blood vessels, bones & joints; Thiamine (B1) for energy production and critical for cognitive function.

-Lots of protein – 1 cup pinto beans provide >15g protein. When combined with whole grain (such as wheat pasta or brown rice), can provide similar protein as meat or dairy but without the calories, fat or disease associated. When getting protein from pinto beans, also get health benefits as mentioned.

Pumpkin Seeds

Good source of zinc (is mostly in the endosperm just beneath the shell. Good idea to eat shell and all.

Contain different forms of Vitamin E. Contains a lot of antioxidants

Have lignans that are proteins that can have antiviral, antimicrobial/antifungal effects as well as be protective from cancer

May help with enlarged prostate

Tofu

Contains all essential amino acids, has iron, manganese, calcium, vitamin A

½ cup has 21 g protein

Other health benefits come from the flavonoids

Studies have shown that eating a serving of tofu at least 4 times a week showed a decreased cardiovascular risk of dying from a heart attack

Hormone risks unfounded

Tomatoes

Able to lower LDL and improve responsiveness of blood vessel walls

Lowers risk of skin cancer due to carotenoids & antioxidants.

Walnuts

Has unusually high level of Vitamin E in the form of gamma-tocopherol that is cardioprotective

Consumption can help protect against DM2, metabolic syndrome, and cardiovascular disease as well as decrease risk of certain cancers (prostate and breast) due to its antioxidant/ anti-inflammatory effects

1 oz of tree nuts recommended daily

Rich in omega 3 fatty acids

Decreases LDL and total cholesterol, decreases aortic endothelin and increases endothelial cell function, decreased platelet activity, decreases C-reactive protein and TNF-a

Can prevent against bone loss

Source for Jackfruit: Ranasinghe, et al. International Journal of Food Science Volume 2019, Article ID 4327183, 12 pages.

<https://doi.org/10.1155/2019/4327183>

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Source: George Mateljan, "The World's Healthiest Foods" book and website (<https://whfoods.com/foodstoc.php>)

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