

# 10 HEALTHY FOODS

## 10 Foods You Should Eat Every Day

Stock your kitchen with these super foods to ensure your diet is packed with antioxidants, fiber and other healthy properties:



### Blueberries

Blueberries have more antioxidants—those magical molecules that can help prevent a host of maladies—than 40 other common fruits and vegetables tested.

The antioxidant plant pigments that make blueberries blue guard against heart disease, cancer and age-related blindness and memory loss. They're also tops when it comes to preventing urinary tract infections, thanks to antioxidant epicatechins, which keep bacteria from sticking to bladder walls.

**How much?** 1/2 cup (125 mL) of blueberries equals one fruit and vegetable serving per day.

**Tip:** Sprinkle blueberries on your pancakes at the last minute, cooking the berries destroys valuable vitamin C.



## Garlic

Garlic has antibacterial, antifungal and antiviral properties. Most of its disease fighting potential comes from its sulfur compounds, which act as antioxidants, providing many of its cardiovascular benefits. Just six or more cloves of garlic a week can slash your risk of colorectal, stomach and prostate cancer in half compared to eating one clove a week or less.

**How much?** Incorporate at least one garlic clove into your diet every day.

**Tip:** Chop or crush your garlic, then let it stand for 10 minutes to fully release its healing potential.



## Olive oil

Press an olive and you get one of the healthiest fats in the world. The main benefit of olive oil is that it lowers “bad” LDL cholesterol and raises “good” HDL cholesterol, thanks to its mono-saturated fats. Olive oil is also packed with antioxidants called phenols, which may protect artery walls from cholesterol buildup.

**How much?** Include up to 1 tablespoon (15 mL) of olive oil in your diet every day.

**Tip:** Look for “virgin,” “extra virgin” or “cold-pressed” oils, which are extracted by pressing alone. Solvents and heat used to produce “light or “extra-light” oils destroy antioxidants.



## Broccoli

Consider broccoli your number one cancer fighter, thanks to its sulfur compounds, such as sulforaphane, which you can smell as broccoli cooks. These compounds signal our genes to boost production of enzymes that detoxify potentially cancer causing compounds. Eat more broccoli and you could slash your risk of everything from breast and lung cancer to stomach and colon cancer.

**How much?** 1/2 cup (125 mL) of cooked broccoli is one fruit and vegetable serving.

**Tip:** Steam broccoli for 3 to 4 minutes until it's crisp-tender to free up more of its sulforaphane.



## Yogurt

Yogurt is a great source of bone building calcium, but its real strength lies in live beneficial bacteria, known as probiotics, that keep down the growth of harmful bacteria in your gut. Eating more yogurt could help with inflammatory bowel disease, ulcers, urinary tract infections and vaginal yeast infections.

**How much?**  $\frac{3}{4}$  cup (175 mL) of low-fat or fat-free yogurt with live cultures is one serving of milk/dairy products.

**Tip:** When coating chicken, pork or fish with bread crumbs, replace the eggs used to moisten the meat with plain yogurt.



## Oats

Oats' cholesterol and blood pressure lowering powers come from beta glucan, a type of soluble fiber. One cup (250 mL) a day of cooked oat bran, 1½ cups (375 mL) of cooked oatmeal or three packets of instant oatmeal provide enough beta glucan to lower blood cholesterol by about five percent and heart attack risk by about 10 percent.

**How much?** Aim for 10 grams of soluble fiber each day. Cooked oats contain 2 to 3 grams per serving.

**Tip:** Buy the type of oatmeal you'll eat. It doesn't matter if it's steel cut or instant.



## Flaxseeds

A tablespoon of ground flaxseed sprinkled over cereal or yogurt provides an easy 2.3 grams of fiber, often more than what's in the cereal itself. But flaxseed is most revered for its lignans. These act like estrogen in the body, blocking estrogen receptors on cells and contributing to reduced rates of certain hormone-related cancers, such as breast cancer. Their anti-inflammatory power may also help keep conditions from acne to asthma at bay.

**How much?** Sneak 1 to 2 tablespoons (15 to 25 mL) of ground flaxseed into your diet daily.

**Tip:** Make sure your flax is ground; otherwise, the seeds will come out the same way they went in (whole), and you won't reap the health benefits.



## Cinnamon

Cinnamon is one of the most powerful healing spices. It's become most famous for its ability to improve blood sugar control in people with diabetes. The apple pie spice can help prevent blood clots and has antibacterial and anti-inflammatory properties. It has been shown to conquer *E. coli*, among other types of bacteria.

**How much?** As little as  $\frac{1}{4}$  to  $\frac{1}{2}$  teaspoon of (1 to 2 mL) a day could cut triglycerides and total cholesterol by 12 to 30 percent.

**Tip:** Sprinkle some cinnamon on your daily coffee to reap the benefits of this super spice.





## Tea

Tea is one of the most potent sources of antioxidants in nature (more potent than any fruit or vegetable).

Tea's antioxidants offer protection from heart disease, stroke and cancer. They appear to protect against heart disease by slowing the breakdown of "bad" LDL cholesterol, preventing blood clots and improving blood vessel function. People who drink a cup or two of tea a day have a 46 percent lower risk of developing narrowed arteries.

**How much?** Brew up two to five cups daily.

**Tip:** Drink most of your tea between meals since the tannins interfere with the absorption of iron from food.



## Beans

Beans are in fact good for your heart, thanks in large part to their soluble fiber, which soaks up cholesterol so the body can dispose of it before it can stick to artery walls. Studies find that diets high in soluble fiber can cut total cholesterol by 10 to 15 percent. A recent study also ranked beans among the top antioxidant foods.

**How much?**  $\frac{3}{4}$  cup (175 mL) of beans equals one serving of meat and alternatives.

**Tip:** Beans contain more protein than any other plant food, but the protein is incomplete. Eat a grain such as rice at any time of the day to “complete” the protein.

More Information found at <http://www.besthealthmag.ca/>