

# 'Superfoods' Everyone Needs

Experts say dozens of easy-to-find 'superfoods' can help ward off heart disease, cancer, cholesterol, and more. Imagine a superfood -- not a drug -- powerful enough to help you lower your cholesterol, reduce your risk of heart disease and cancer, and, for an added bonus, put you in a better mood. Did we mention that there are no side effects? You'd surely stock up on a lifetime supply. Guess what? These life-altering superfoods are available right now in your local supermarket.

"The effect that diet can have on how you feel today and in the future is astounding. Even people who are healthy can make a few tweaks and the impact will be amazing. 50% to 70% of suffering could be eliminated by what people eat and how they move: heart disease, diabetes, cancer, hypertension can all be impacted. You don't need specific foods for specific ailments. A healthy diet incorporating a variety of the following superfoods will help you maintain your weight, fight disease, and live longer. One thing they all have in common: "Every superfood is going to be a 'real' (unprocessed) food," You don't find fortified potato chips in the superfood category.

## Top Superfoods Offering Super Health Protection

Beans	Blueberries	Broccoli	Oats	Oranges	Pumpkin
Salmon	Soy	Spinach	Tea (green or black)		Tomatoes
Turkey	Walnuts	Yogurt			

### Blueberries -- Antioxidant Superfood

Packed with antioxidants and phytoflavonoids, these berries are also high in potassium and vitamin C, making them the top choice of doctors and nutritionists. Not only can they lower your risk of heart disease and cancer, they are also anti-inflammatory.

"Inflammation is a key driver of all chronic diseases, so blueberries have a host of benefits. When selecting berries, note that the darker they are, the more anti-oxidants they have. Everyone should have a serving (about 1/2 cup) every day. Frozen are just as good as fresh. Be sure to include lots of other fruits and vegetables in your diet as well. Remember too that, in general, the more color they have, the more antioxidants.

### Omega 3-Rich Fish -- Superfoods for the Heart, Joints, and Memory

"We know that the omega 3s you get in fish lower heart disease risk, help arthritis, and may possibly help with memory loss and Alzheimer's. There is some evidence to show that it reduces depression as well. Omega-3s are most prevalent in fatty, cold-water fish: Look for wild (not farmed) salmon, herring, sardines, and mackerel. Aim for two-to-three servings a week. Other forms of omega 3s are available in fortified eggs, flax seed, and walnuts. These superfoods have the added benefit of being high in monounsaturated fats, which can lower cholesterol.

### Soy -- Superfood to Lower Cholesterol

A study reported that a diet of soy fiber, protein from oats and barley, almonds, and margarine from plant sterols lowered cholesterol as much as statins, the most widely prescribed cholesterol medicine. Look for tofu, soy milk, or edamame -- not soy powder. In other words, soy sauce won't do the trick. One caveat: If you have a family history of breast cancer it is not recommended that you eat extra soy.

### **Fiber -- Superfood Aids Weight Loss and Checks Cholesterol**

A diet high in fiber will help you maintain healthy cholesterol and blood sugar levels. As a bonus, because fiber helps you feel full longer, it's a great tool in weight management. Whole grains, beans, fruit, and vegetables are all good sources. Try throwing some beans in your salad. Fresh, frozen, or dried are the best. You can use canned, but they tend to be higher in sodium.

### **Tea -- Superfood for Lowering Cholesterol and Inhibiting Cancer**

The overall antioxidant power of black tea is the same as green tea, but green tea does have ECGC, a powerful antioxidant that is quite special. A recent Japanese study on green tea found that men who drank green tea regularly had lower cholesterol than those who didn't. Researchers in Spain and the United Kingdom have also shown that ECGC can inhibit the growth of cancer cells. For a double health whammy, replace sugary sodas with tea.

### **Calcium**

OK, OK, you know the drill: Calcium helps build strong bones and prevents osteoporosis. Look for it in dairy products or supplements. Added bonus: Some studies show that calcium helps with weight loss. Here are the calcium levels recommended for adults by the USDA:

Age 9 to 18 -- 1,300 mg

Age 19 to 50 -- 1,000 mg

Age 51 and over -- 1,200 mg

### **And Finally, the Yummiest Superfood Yet ... Dark Chocolate**

New research has shown that dark chocolate is packed with antioxidants and can lower blood pressure. Look for chocolate with 60% or higher cocoa content; the darker, the better. In addition, the darker it is, the lower the fat and sugar content. Now that's our kind of health food!