



Antioxidants

Why they're so good for us and where to find them

Why they're so good for us

Antioxidants are substances that may protect your cells against the effects of free radicals by interacting with and neutralizing them. Free radicals are molecules produced when your body breaks down food, or by environmental exposures like tobacco smoke and radiation. Free radicals can damage cells, and may play a role in heart disease, cancer and other diseases. New research has also found that antioxidants may also inhibit the growth of triglycerides – fatty materials inside fat cells, which at high levels increase the risk of heart disease (<http://www.foodnavigatorusa.com/news/ng.asp?n=81281&m=1FNUN12&c=uyywbncrazkakx>).

- **Antioxidant substances** include Beta-carotene, Lutein, Lycopene, Selenium, and Vitamins A, C & E.
- **Antioxidants are found in many foods** including fruits and vegetables, nuts, legumes, grains, and some meats, poultry and fish.

Where to find them—food or supplements?

While research has found antioxidants from foods to be beneficial to our health, there have not been conclusive findings that supplements provide those same benefits. Many antioxidants are often identified in food by their distinctive colors—the deep red of cherries or tomatoes; the orange of carrots; the yellow of corn, mangoes, and saffron; and the blue-purple of blueberries, blackberries, and grapes. More antioxidant-rich foods include:

- **Berries** – blueberries, sour cherries, strawberries, cranberries, raspberries
- **Fruits** – pomegranates, grapes, tomatoes, plums, lemons, dates, kiwi, oranges, grapefruit
- **Legumes** – pinto beans, red beans, kidney beans, soy beans
- **Nuts, seeds, dried fruit** – walnuts, pecans, apricots, prunes
- **Vegetables** – kale, red cabbage, peppers, artichokes, brussel sprouts, spinach
- **Whole grains** – whole grain bread, cereal, brown rice, bulgur
- **Other** – garlic, dark chocolate, tea, red wine



Brightly colored fruits like the pomegranate are a rich source of antioxidants.

More information about antioxidants

- Food sources, research: <http://www.ific.org/publications/factsheets/antioxidantfs.cfm>
 - General information: <http://www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/antioxidants.html>
 - Antioxidants and citrus: <http://www.foodnavigator-usa.com/news/ng.asp?n=81349&m=1FNUN14&c=uyywbncrazkakx>
 - Research and Q&A: <http://www.cancer.gov/cancertopics/factsheet/antioxidantsprevention>
 - Research on blueberries: <http://www.foodnavigator-usa.com/news/ng.asp?n=81446&m=1FNUN19&c=uyywbncrazkakx>
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