



Summer's Bounty: Eating a Rainbow of Color

In July, the local farms are bursting with seasonal fruits and vegetables. All this colorful produce is here to provide us with a host of vitamins and minerals to keep us healthy, but also very powerful phytochemicals which also positively impact our health. There is no better time than summer to enjoy a wide variety of colorful fruits and vegetables.

Did you know that the color or pigments found in plants represent over 25,000 phytochemicals? They have specific functions in the plants, but also exhibit positive benefits in our body. There is evidence that interaction between the colors provides additional benefits, so it's important to eat a variety of fruits and vegetables. Choose as many colors as you can to create a rainbow of foods that are powerful health fighters.

RED

Food sources: tomato, tomato products, red peppers, red carrots, watermelon, pink grapefruit

Lycopene is a carotenoid that provides a red pigment in plants. Although it is a carotenoid, it has no vitamin A activity. Lycopene is an antioxidant, and several cohort studies suggest that a lycopene-rich diet is associated with a significant reduction in the risk of prostate cancer.

ORANGE

Food sources: carrots, yellow summer squash, sweet potato/yam, mango, peach, nectarines, apricots, cantaloupe, citrus, winter squash

YELLOW

Beta-carotene is a carotenoid that provides orange and yellow pigments in plants. It is a provitamin A carotenoid, meaning it can be converted by the body to retinol (vitamin A). Beta-carotene is a powerful antioxidant and, as a member of the carotenoid family, they support eye health, cardiovascular health, and skin health, and have also been studied for their possible anti-tumor properties.

GREEN

Food sources: kale, collards, chard, parsley, broccoli, spinach, green beans, peas, cabbage, lettuces, herbs, zucchini, cucumbers

Chlorophyll is the most abundant pigment in plants and provides a green color. It is an antioxidant and is studied for its anti-cancer and detoxifying properties. Chlorophyll has demonstrated an ability to decrease the activation of carcinogens and increase the body's ability to eliminate them from the body.

BLUE

Food sources: blueberries, raspberries, strawberries, blackberries, purple cabbage, purple carrots, purple potatoes, purple asparagus, red onions, red grapes, beets

PURPLE

Anthocyanidin is a purple, blue, and red pigment found in plants. It is a powerful antioxidant in the flavonoid family. Higher intakes of anthocyanidin-rich foods have been associated with reduced risk of chronic disease, such as, heart disease, certain cancers, and Alzheimer's. They also help reduce inflammation and boost the immune system.

WHITE

Food sources: onions, garlic, leeks, green onions, pears, apples, cauliflower, bok choy

Anthoxanthins provide a white pigment and are found in the flavonoid family. They are antioxidants, but more importantly they have many roles in the prevention of cancer. They help in detoxification, killing cancer cells, decreasing inflammation, and preventing tumor invasion.



RECIPE

Local Lettuce with Summer Squash and Tomatoes

Ingredients

- 2 medium summer squash (about 8 ounces each), halved lengthwise and sliced 1 inch thick crosswise
- 2 medium tomatoes, cored and sliced 1 inch thick
- 1 small onion, peeled and roughly chopped
- 2 tablespoons avocado oil
- Coarse salt and freshly ground pepper
- 2 tablespoons red wine vinegar
- 2 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil
- 2 or 3 leaves basil, thinly sliced
- 1 head of local lettuce, washed, dried, and cut into 1-inch pieces
- 4 ounces feta cheese

Directions

Heat broiler. If using a broiler-proof rimmed baking sheet, set rack 4 inches from heat; if using a broiler pan, set rack so that top of pan is 4 inches from heat. On sheet (or pan), toss summer squash and tomatoes with avocado oil, ½ teaspoon salt, and ¼ teaspoon pepper. Broil until tender and slightly charred, 20 to 25 minutes; transfer to a plate to cool.

In a small jar, combine vinegar, extra virgin olive oil, basil, pinch of salt and a pinch of pepper. Shake until combined and thickened.

Once the tomatoes are cool, roughly chop them. Divide the lettuce, summer squash, tomatoes, onions, and feta among serving plates; drizzle with dressing as desired.

Serves: 4

Your Green Bean Delivery Shopping List!



Mini Sweet Peppers



Rainbow Carrots



Yellow Summer Squash



Kale



Blueberries



Sweet Potatoes



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