6 Antioxidant-rich Foods for Good Health

Antioxidants are natural substances that offer protection against cell damage. In addition, they help fight free radicals, highly reactive molecules that can damage your healthy cells, DNA, and protein. In fact, free radical damage can lead to cancer. Fruits and vegetables are good sources of antioxidants. Adding antioxidant-rich foods to your diet can be beneficial for your health.

Apples

Apples are a good source of antioxidant flavonoids. Flavonoids offer protection to plants against ultraviolet light and pathogens. In addition, these compounds impart color to flowers and fruits. According to a study published in the American Journal of Clinical Nutrition in 2002, flavonoid intake is associated with a lower risk of chronic diseases. There are many simple ways to include apples in your diet. Give a fruity appeal to your omelet by adding apples. Grate apples and add to waffles or pancakes. You can also toss a few slices on your oatmeal.

Onions

In addition to providing flavor, onions provide health-promoting nutrients such as calcium, vitamin C, iron, dietary fiber, and folic acid. Furthermore, onions contain the flavonoid quercetin. According to the National Onion Association, studies have demonstrated that eating onions may help reduce the risk of certain diseases. Consumption of onions may help prevent gastric ulcers by inhibiting the growth of Helicobacter pylori, a microorganism responsible for causing ulcers. To reap its benefits, add sauteed chopped

onions to any vegetable dish. You can also top your plain rice with onions and sesame seeds.

Strawberries

Deliciously sweet strawberries possess a strong antioxidant capacity. A study published in the journal “Food Chemistry” found that eating strawberries regularly can boost blood antioxidant levels and prevent chronic diseases. Also, these soft red fruits help maintain healthy eyes and skin. Flavonoids present in strawberries help fight free radical formation, thereby reducing the risk of dementia, cancer, diabetes, and heart disease. You can enjoy strawberries as an afternoon snack or toss a handful in your morning cereal.

Eggplant

Eggplant contains chlorogenic acid that exhibits very strong antioxidant activity. According to the researchers at the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s Agricultural Research Service, chlorogenic acid in eggplant not only helps fight free radicals, it also helps lower cholesterol. The compound can prevent cells from changing into cancer cells. To reap the benefits, add eggplant cubes to your curry sauce and serve over brown rice. Top your pizza with eggplant cubes.

Kiwi

Kiwi is packed with two vital antioxidants: vitamin A and vitamin E. Both of these vitamins help keep free radical damage at bay. Eating kiwis can help keep your blood pressure under control. By incorporating kiwis into your diet, you can give your immune system a boost. Fiber found in the fruit helps in the digestion of food. You can enjoy kiwi in many ways. Use it in fruit tarts. Make a chilled soup by blending cantaloupe and kiwifruit together. You can also add the fruit

to tossed green salads.

Blackberries

According to The Berry Health Benefits Network, blackberries are rich in vitamin C, ellagic acid, and fiber. Studies have shown that these nutrients help in decreasing the risk of certain cancers. A phenolic compound, ellagic acid has antiviral, anticarcinogen, and antibacterial properties. Furthermore, blackberries have the highest antioxidant levels of all fruits. You can use blackberries in jellies and jams. Mix them into plain yogurts or make a blackberry milkshake by blending blackberries with low-fat vanilla ice cream.

Conclusion

Adding antioxidant-rich foods to your diet will enhance your ability to fight disease. Also, make sure to lead a healthy lifestyle by exercising regularly, getting enough sleep, avoiding smoking, and minimizing alcohol consumption. Unhealthy lifestyle habits can increase the formation of disease-causing free radicals.

Sources:

- *Flavonoid intake and risk of chronic diseases* – PubMed – NCBI
- *Onion Health Research* – The National Onion Association
- *Strawberry consumption improves plasma antioxidant status and erythrocyte resistance to oxidative hemolysis in humans* – Science Direct
- *Healing Foods For Your Health: The 10 Best Antioxidant-Rich Foods To Add To Your Diet* – Medical Daily
- *Blackberry Facts* – Berry health Benefits Network