

# Health Benefits of Avocados

## The Anti-Aging Power of Avocados

Foods that have an incredible array of health benefits that go well beyond just their nutrient value are considered superfoods. These foods are typically loaded with a combination of critical fatty acids, anti-oxidant phytonutrients, and essential amino acids. Avocados are one of the best anti-aging superfoods to consume.

Avocados are native to Central America and were a favorite food of the Aztec Indians. The avocado plant is part of the flowering plant family Lauraceae, which includes camphor, bay laurel, and cinnamon. Avocados are considered a fruit. They are cultivated in tropical climates throughout the world, including southern Florida and California.

## Avocado's Have a Long, Rich History

The oldest known evidence of avocado use as a food was found in a cave in Puebla, Mexico. The dates of the writings are thought to be from around 10,000 BC. The two major types of avocados are the Hass Avocado and Florida Avocado. The Hass avocado was named after Rudolph Hass who developed an avocado farm and obtained a patent for the avocados he was growing.

The Florida avocados are significantly larger than the Hass avocado's but are lower in overall fat and calories. The Hass avocado is more dense in monounsaturated fatty acids than the Florida avocado. The Hass avocado averages between 18-30% fatty acids while the Florida avocado has about 3-5% fats. This equals out to the Florida avocados being about 25-50% of the total fat content found in the Hass avocados.

## **Avocados Rich in Healthy Fats & Anti-Oxidants**

This amazing fruit is very high in healthy oleic acid. This is a monounsaturated fat that helps increase fat metabolism. It is also rich in the powerful carotenoid anti-oxidants lutein and zeaxanthin as well as Vitamin E (tocopherol).

These anti-oxidants decrease oxidative stress and allow for a healthier cellular environment. Other critical components include ionic potassium and folate. These elements are alkaline forming in the body, helping to buffer acidic wastes that accumulate within the human tissue and bloodstream.

## **Avocados Enhance Nutrient Assimilation**

Avocados are a terrific complement to a vegetable based meal. Most vegetables, particularly in their raw state, contain a high amount of carotenoid based anti-oxidants. Studies have shown that these anti-oxidants are lipophilic (fat-loving) and are absorbed best in the body when combined with a healthy fat such as oleic acid.

A study published in the Journal of Nutrition in March 2005 showed that adding avocados to salads increased absorption of alpha-carotene, beta-carotene, and lutein 7.2, 15.3, and 5.1 times higher, respectively, than the average amount of these carotenoids absorbed when avocado-free salad was eaten.

Hass avocados have been found to be the most densely concentrated variety of the avocado fruit. They contain the highest content of lutein and zeaxanthin and other fat-soluble nutrients. Both types of avocados are terrific for the digestive system as they contain a good variety of both soluble and insoluble fibers.

# Avocados' s Have Anti-Aging Nutrients

Avocados are one of the best anti-aging foods that prevent wrinkles and skin aging. The D-manno-heptulose sugar that is found in avocados has been shown to improve the skin's epidermis by boosting collagen formation. Avocados also contain specific amino acids and carotenoid anti-oxidants that reduce age spots, soothe inflammation, and heal scars and burns.

When looking to find a ripe avocado, it is best to feel the consistency rather than judge them off of their color. Ripe avocados that are still good are typically firm but have slight give to them. Any sort of mushy consistency is a warning sign that the inside meat is oxidized and rotten.

Refrigerating your avocados will increase their shelf life while putting them in a bag with an old banana peel will make them ripen faster.

## Sources For This Article Include:

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