

[IMAGE]

5 Essential Fruits You Need To Eat This Summer

With summer upon us, more families will be outdoors grilling and snacking. If you are looking for a healthy way to consume your summer calories, think about fresh fruit that can add vitamins and nutrients and lower the amount of calories you will be consuming.

When thinking about what fruits are best to consume, it is best to look at the nutritional value of each first. Here are some tips and recommendations for the best five fruits you can include in your summer smoothies, fruit salads and beach snacks:

1. Apples

Remember the phrase "An apple a day keeps the doctor away"? – well its true. Apples contain antioxidants called flavonoids, which may help lower the chance of developing serious diseases such as diabetes and cancer. The real vitamins are in the skin of the apple, so make sure not to peel! Apples are also a great way to maintain good oral health. So, this summer snack on a few and make them part of your summer treats!

2. Avocado

Avocados are often referred to as "healthy fats" – yes, they contain some fat, but in the long run it is fat that will benefit your overall health. They contain healthy monounsaturated fats that can help lower cholesterol levels when eaten instead of harmful saturated fats. For a heart-healthy boost, replace butter with avocado on your favorite sandwich, dice some slices into your summer salad or eat alone at some of your summer barbeques.

3. Banana

Bananas are ideal for summer smoothies, not only do they have great texture and flavor, but they contain 422 milligrams of potassium per banana. If you take into consideration all of the potassium included in bananas, you will be delighted. They contain more potassium than most fruits, which in turn helps to lower your blood pressure.

4. Berries

Blackberries, raspberries and strawberries are almost always ripe and in season during the hot summer months and make a great mix for any healthy fruit salad. The deep colors from the berries means they are high in antioxidants – which are known to reduce the risk of stroke and cancer. Many studies have suggested that berries also can stop the growth of cancer cells from multiplying. Get your berries and make them a health staple this summer!

5. Tomatoes

This red fruit (often considered a vegetable) contains lycopene, a powerful antioxidant that helps fight heart disease and possibly some types of cancer, particularly prostate cancer. Use tomatoes in everything from salads to sauces this summer.

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