

[IMAGE]

10 Foods Your Body Needs

By Editorial Staff

What do a guava, a cabbage and a weed have in common? They're all foods you should be eating. Find out why you should add these and seven other fruits, vegetables and plants to your diet to maximize your health and wellness.

Fruits

Guava. - Copyright © Stock Photo / Register Mark *Guava* is a slightly pear-shaped tropical fruit known for its sweet, acidic flavor and yellow or pink color. It contains such cancer-fighting agents as lycopene, known for warding off prostate cancer. And with 688 mg of potassium and 9 grams of fiber, this fruit is a must for anyone's diet.

Gogi berries. - Copyright © Stock Photo / Register Mark *Gogi berries* resemble raisins, taste sweet and sour, and are red in color. Eating them can help protect the liver, improve sexual function and increase circulation. They also have the highest Oxygen Radical Absorbance Capacity (ORAC) rating (a method of measuring antioxidant levels in food) of any fruit, according to researchers at Tufts University.

Dried plums. - Copyright © Stock Photo / Register Mark *Dried plums*, also known as prunes, are somewhat infamous for their high fiber content. However, don't forget that they also include high amounts of neochlorogenic and chlorogenic acids which fight the "superoxide anion radical," known to cause structural damage to cells, one of the primary causes of cancer.

Pomegranate juice. - Copyright © Stock Photo / Register Mark *Pomegranate juice* has been consumed for decades in the Middle East as a popular juice beverage; now it's becoming popular in the United States. Just 4 oz. a day provides 50 percent of your daily vitamin C needs.

Vegetables

Cabbage. - Copyright © Stock Photo / Register Mark *Cabbage* is a leafy, green vegetable. Its benefits: a healthy supply of nutrients including sulforaphane, a chemical which increases your body's production of enzymes that combat cell-damaging free radicals and reduce the risk of cancer.

Beets. - Copyright © Stock Photo / Register Mark *Beets* are roots known for their dark red coloring and are surprisingly sweet for a vegetable. They are one of the best sources of both folate and betaine, which help to lower your blood levels of homocysteine. That's good news because homocysteine can damage arteries and increase the risk of heart disease.

Swiss chard. - Copyright © Stock Photo / Register Mark *Swiss chard* is a slightly bitter and salty vegetable. It contains huge amounts of lutein and zeaxanthin, plant chemicals known as carotenoids that protect the retinas from age-related damage.

Plants

Purslane. - Copyright © Stock Photo / Register Mark *Purslane* is a broad-leaved weed. It features the highest amount of heart-healthy omega-3 fats of any edible plant and has 10 to 20 times more melatonin than any other fruit or vegetable.

Cinnamon. - Copyright © Stock Photo / Register Mark *Cinnamon* is a common spice most of us think of when we make cake or cookies - but don't overlook a pinch or two on your oatmeal or in your coffee. Cinnamon's health benefits include controlling your blood sugar and lowering triglycerides and LDL (bad) cholesterol. Active ingredients include methylhydroxychalcone polymers, which increase your cells' ability to metabolize up to 20 times.

Pumpkin seeds. - Copyright © Stock Photo / Register Mark *Pumpkin seeds* are too frequently tossed away during the traditional October pumpkin carving. That's a mistake, because just 1 ounce contains 150 mg of magnesium. Pumpkin seeds also are high in zinc and phytosterols, shown to lower cholesterol and defend against cancer.

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