

[IMAGE]

## Vitamin Rich Foods You Should Be Eating

By Julie T. Chen, MD

When I help patients in my clinic, I frequently see articles or information about specific foods that are high in vitamins for patients to eat. I also see the impact of this on my patients' diet such that then they start to eat a lot of only those foods. And since each article can't possibly list all the vitamin-rich foods that a person should eat, the end result is that many of my patients come into the clinic saying they are eating the same five or ten vegetable or fruits every day or every other day.

I tend to have a problem with this concept of just mentioning some key foods that are high in vitamins to patients exactly for this reason...that patients sometimes will then go and eat just a lot of those foods. They lose sight of the big picture and in eating this way, they miss out on the nutrients of many other foods.

So, what do I tell my own patients then?

I tell my patients to eat the colors of the rainbow every day and try to eat that at every meal. I am not opposed to the concept that there are indeed foods that pack more vitamins and minerals than other foods, but by narrowing the concept into top five or top ten foods, the problem becomes that people miss out on all of Mother Nature's star players.

Vitamin Rich Foods - Copyright © Stock Photo / Register Mark So when my patients come into the clinic asking which foods have the most vitamins in them, I give them general categories rather than specific foods. This is with the purpose that they keep in mind that they need to eat in categories and not in specifics. By eating this way, you won't be missing out in essential nutrients.

If you truly want me to narrow down into the major power players of foods that should always be in our diet? Well, here goes...

- **Nuts:** eat these in as close to natural form as possible. Not drenched in honey or salt or chocolate. Eat a variety of them and if you do, you will get many of the essential minerals and vitamins and healthy essential fatty acids that our body needs to run at optimal capacity.
- **Vegetables in all the colors of the rainbow:** When you eat vegetables in different colors, you

naturally are eating a diverse amount of antioxidants. This takes the guess work out of your vegetables for your meal as to what to serve yourself and your loved ones.

- **Legumes:** These are also high in fiber, vitamins and minerals. For those who have nut sensitivities or allergies but want to make sure they get plenty of plant-based proteins to avoid the saturated fats found in some animal products, this is a great smart option.
- **Fruits:** Because there is a high number of people who know or don't know they have problems metabolizing sugar, I don't always want patients to eat a lot of fruits. I always say vegetables more than fruits in case you have triglyceride or glucose issues. But if you are craving something sweet, fruits are of course a much better option than processed sweets.

So, there we go. Those are the power foods I recommend. I know it's not the top five or ten specific foods I gave you to eat for power-packed nutrients...but thinking of food in categories and keeping in mind to vary your diet within these categories on a day to day basis will keep your body humming along smoothly with the essential nutrients it needs. This way, you'll never get stuck in a rut eating the same five power foods every day...because when you do that, at the end of the day, you are still missing nutrients because your diet lacks variety.

So, keep your diet as interesting and not boring as possible...get foods from these categories into every meal with various different colors and types and as close to the form it came in from Mother Nature. To eat this way is eating a power-packed diet without all the guess work...just remember, keep it colorful and keep it changing and varied.

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