

[IMAGE]

Good for the Heart

By Editorial Staff

Do you eat enough nitrate-rich vegetables? Don't know which veggies are nitrate-rich in the first place – or don't eat any vegetables at all? Here's your primer on why nitrate-rich veggies can help protect your heart.

Myocardial infarction (MI) is the clinical term for a heart attack. It's called that because a heart attack occurs when blood flow to a portion of the *myocardium* (heart muscle) is disrupted or stopped altogether. Ahh, now you're interested in learning more about nitrate-rich veggies, right?

Recent research suggests nitrate-rich vegetables are important in reducing the risk of experiencing a heart attack. Published in the *Journal of Clinical Investigation*, the study found that when comparing rats randomly assigned to consume either a nitrate-rich diet (leafy green vegetables, etc.) or nitrate-poor diet, and then subjected to MI conditions, rats in the nitrate-rich diet were better protected. The researchers explain that this is due to nitric-rich vegetables enhancing the ability of red blood cells to protect against MI when conditions exist (reduced oxygen / blood flow).

So, back to our original question: Do you eat enough nitrate-rich vegetables? If you're not including enough spinach, lettuce, fennel, Chinese cabbage, parsley, etc., in your diet, now's the time to start. Talk to your doctor to learn more.

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