

Phytonutrients

What are phytonutrients?

Phytonutrients are substances produced by plants, and are believed to promote health, slow the aging process and reduce the risk of certain diseases. They may also protect against some cancers, heart disease, high blood pressure, stroke and other chronic health conditions.

Most fruits and vegetables contain phytonutrients. Plants produce these substances naturally to protect themselves against viruses and bacteria. They also provide color, aroma and flavor to food.

Where can I find phytonutrients?

Phytonutrients are found in fruits, vegetables, grains, legumes, nuts and teas. Color indicates the type of phytonutrient found in the plant. Choose fruits and vegetables from a rainbow of colors to get the health benefits of phytonutrients.

What's in the color?

Color pigments contain antioxidants that slow or prevent damage to the cells from oxygen. The deeper the color of the fruit or vegetable, the more powerful the antioxidant.

What do they do?

- Help you stay healthy and energetic
- Protect against the effects of aging
- Protect against the risk of some cancers and heart disease
- May help protect against stroke, high blood pressure, cataracts, osteoporosis and urinary tract infections



Tips to add phytonutrients to your diet

- Keep ready-to-eat fruits and vegetables handy and visible
- Add spinach leaf or tomato to sandwiches
- Snack on fruits and vegetables
- Top a whole-grain cereal with blueberries, blackberries or strawberries
- Try a variety of salad greens in a salad topped with several vegetables and garbanzo beans
- Eat more whole grains

Paint your plate with color

Add these colors to your plate to get great flavor and health benefits:

RED

Source of carotenoids and lycopene

- Maintains a healthy heart
- Urinary tract health
- Memory function
- Lowers risks of some cancers

Found in beets, cherries, red beans, cranberries, kidney beans, tomatoes and watermelon.



ORANGE AND YELLOW

Source of carotenoids and lutein

- Maintains heart, vision and immune system health
- Many fruits and vegetables are high in vitamin C and folic acid
- Beta carotene is the most well-known carotenoid

Found in apricots, cantaloupe, carrots, grapefruit, yellow beets, yellow pears, yellow peppers and yellow winter squash.



GREEN

Source of lutein and zeaxanthin

- Lowers risk of some cancers, heart disease, maintains vision health, protects against birth defects
- Keeps blood cells, bones and teeth strong

Found in artichokes, asparagus, avocados, broccoli, cucumbers, green beans, green peppers, kale, kiwi, celery, spinach and zucchini.



BLUE, PURPLE, BLACK

Source of anthocyanins and flavonoids

- Lowers risk of some cancers
- Promotes healthy aging
- Improves urinary tract health, memory function and heart health

Found in blueberries, plums, blackberries, black beans, eggplant, elderberries, purple cabbage, purple grapes and raisins.



WHITE, TAN, BROWN

Source of sulfur compounds

- Maintains heart health
- Lowers cancer risk

Found in bananas, black-eyed peas, cauliflower, dates, figs, garlic, great northern beans, mushrooms, onions and peanuts.

