

Add Color to Your Diet for Improved Nutrition

Finding the right balance of nutrients matters more than ever for older adults, especially those working to improve bone, cardiovascular and brain health. Here are a few “colors” to add to your daily diet for improved nutrition.

1. Red (strawberries, cherries, tomatoes):

Starting with the first color of the rainbow, red fruits and vegetables contain high levels of antioxidants such as lycopene and anthocyanins. Both of these antioxidants are great at fighting off heart disease as well as reducing the risk of developing cancerous cells, hypertension and even macular degeneration, which is known to be the leading cause of blindness in people over the age of 60. Some well-known fruits and veggies found in this color group that you might want to add to your diet include red bell peppers, strawberries, tomatoes and red leaf lettuce.



2. Orange (yams, carrots, oranges):

Rich in carotenoids, which helps to provide large amounts of vitamin A, many orange-colored foods such as carrots, pumpkins, squashes and yes, even oranges help significantly improve vision. They are also a major source of vitamin C, which is essential for the growth and repair of tissue in all parts of your body.

3. Yellow (squash, bananas, lemons):

Yellow fruits and veggies are packed with antioxidants and vitamins; both are great to fight off cancer cells. Adding fruits such as bananas and lemons, or vegetables such as yellow bell peppers and summer squash to your everyday diet is a great and easy way to get those additional nutrients we all need.

4. Green (spinach, kiwi, apples):

Arguably the most important part of any healthy diet, leafy greens offer countless benefits such as reducing risk of obesity, heart disease and high cholesterol. Healthy green foods can be found almost anywhere, from different kale, spinach and lettuce leaves, to an abundance of fruits such as apples, kiwis, grapes and avocados just to name a few. All these green foods provide the necessary nutrients to keeping you in great shape both physically and mentally.

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5. Blue (blueberries, plums, blackberries):

Blue foods such as blueberries, plums and blackberries are well-known for their benefits of improving memory and healthy aging. However, few know that they are also great immune system boosters and can help prevent heart disease.

6. Purple (elderberries, grapes, eggplant):

Being powerful and rich in anthocyanins, purple foods are the “brain foods.” Purple colored berries such as grapes, elderberries and some blackberries are found to be beneficial for cognition and mood in the brain. Other purple vegetables such as cauliflower and eggplants are great at protecting the body by reducing inflammation, which is known to be a root cause of major diseases such as diabetes, heart disease and arthritis.



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