

Antioxidants

SNAP - Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program

What are Antioxidants?

Antioxidants, such as vitamins C and E and carotenoids, help to protect our healthy cells from damage caused by free radicals.

What are Free Radicals?

Free radicals are substances produced by our body as a result of normal body functions (such as breathing or physical activity) or lifestyle habits (such as smoking). Free radicals attack healthy cells, causing your body's cells to be more susceptible to diseases and certain types of cancers.



The Antioxidants

Carotenoids

Foods high in carotenoids, such as beta-carotene, lycopene, and lutein, may be effective in helping to prevent certain cancers and may help to decrease your risk of macular degeneration.

Vitamin E

Vitamin E works with other antioxidants, like vitamin C, to protect your body from cell damage that can lead to cancer, heart disease, cataracts, or other chronic diseases as we age.

Vitamin C

Vitamin C works to protect your body from infection and damage to body cells, produce collagen (the connective tissue that holds bones and muscles together), and helps your body absorb iron.

Which foods are high in antioxidants?

Carotenoids: Foods high in carotenoids include red, orange, deep-yellow, and some dark green leafy vegetables (i.e. sweet potatoes, spinach, carrots, tomatoes, Brussels sprouts, winter squash, and broccoli).

Vitamin E: Vitamin E is found in vegetable oils, wheat germ, whole grains and fortified cereals, seeds, and nuts.

Vitamin C: Foods rich in vitamin C include citrus fruits (i.e. oranges, grapefruits, and tangerines), strawberries, sweet peppers, tomatoes, broccoli, and potatoes.

Source: EatRight.org



How do I include antioxidants in my diet?

- The best way to get antioxidants is through foods rather than supplements.
- Antioxidants are abundant in fruits and vegetables.
- For most adults, eating at least 1 ½ cups of fruit and 2 ½ cups of vegetables a day is a good start to increasing your antioxidant consumption and creating an overall more healthful diet!

Source: EatRight.org

Berry Banana Smoothie

Ingredients (makes 1 serving)

- 1 cup low-fat milk or 1 cup low-fat yogurt
- 1 ½ cups fresh or frozen berries (mixed, such as strawberries, raspberries, blackberries, or blueberries)
- 1 ripe banana, cut into chunks (preferably frozen)
- Optional: 1 tablespoon protein powder
- Optional: 4 ice cubes

Directions

1. Gather ingredients.
2. Add all ingredients to a blender and blend on high speed until smooth.
3. Serve immediately.



Recipe and Photo from: thespruceeats.com

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