

Apples

Apples are a great food for many reasons including the ability to reduce the risk of heart disease, certain cancers, high blood pressure, and type-2 diabetes. They also benefit the respiratory system by preventing lung cancer and asthma. By consuming apples your body gets fiber, potassium and antioxidants, such as Vitamin C and polyphenols. Studies show that the real benefit comes from the synergistic interaction between these ingredients. To take best advantage of apples for your health, eat a wide variety and make sure that you eat the peel, which contains several times more antioxidants than the inside. As they say, eat an apple a day.

Avocados

When you want to help your body absorb more nutrients from the foods you eat, have an avocado too. Fat soluble phytonutrients, like beta-carotene, are more easily absorbed by the body because of the monounsaturated fat in the avocado. Avocados also help you keep your weight down because they help you feel full, which triggers your body to stop eating. They are calorie rich at 48 calories per ounce, so for best results eat one-third to one-half an avocado two to three times a week.

Dark Chocolate

When you want a little indulgence with your health food, try dark chocolate. It contains lots of polyphenols which lower blood pressure and is a natural anti-inflammatory. You should keep in mind that blood pressure lowering qualities are only in dark chocolate, but not in its cousin, milk chocolate. In 2000 a study published by the American Journal of Clinical Nutrition showed that the effect on blood flow from high flavanol cocoa was similar to taking a low-dose aspirin. These means that dark chocolate could possibly be used to treat ailments like minor pains or headaches. For the best results use Newman's Own Sweet Dart Chocolate, as Dr Pratt has found it has more polyphenols than any other dark chocolate he has found. Like avocado, chocolate is high in calories, so shoot for no more than 100 calories a day.

Olive Oil

There has been much discussion lately about the benefits of the Mediterranean diet. Well olive oil is one of the main components of that diet and its benefits are outstanding. It is a great substitute for other oils and fats and has been shown to reduce the risk of breast and colon cancer, lower blood pressure, and improve the health of your cardiovascular system. For best results take a tablespoon a day of extra virgin olive oil that is cold pressed and greenish in color. This green color helps you spot high levels of polyphenols.

Garlic

Another component of the Mediterranean diet, Garlic is great for your cardiovascular system. By eating garlic regularly, you can reduce your blood pressure, triglyceride levels and your LDL(bad) cholesterol. Garlic also has anti-inflammatory agents and antibiotic properties. To grab all the health benefits of garlic, eat one clove several times a week. Raw garlic is best, but cooked is good too. Keep in mind that dried garlic and garlic supplements don't have the same benefits as fresh garlic.

Honey

Honey is not often seen on many lists of healthy foods, but don't let that fool you. Eating honey daily increases the amounts of antioxidant in the blood, helps to prevent constipation, and reduces cholesterol and blood pressure. If you are running low on energy, reach for the honey, not sugar. Honey does a better job of maintaining blood sugar and energy than other sweeteners. And choose dark honeys over light ones, because they are higher in antioxidants and flavor. One to two teaspoons several times a week should do the trick

Kiwis

If you want extreme quantities of Vitamin C and E that can reduce risk of asthma, osteoarthritis, and colon cancer, and boost your immune system, then grab a kiwi or two. An interesting point to keep in mind is that dietary vitamin E appears to lower the risk of Alzheimer's, and by consuming kiwis, you get vitamin E without the calories that most other vitamin e rich foods contain, like nuts and oils. Another stellar ingredient is lutein, which lowers the risk cataracts and macular degeneration. To get all the above benefits and reduce the risk of blood clots, then consume one kiwi, two to three times a week

Onions

For the benefits of onions, you can just reread the benefits of garlic, because they are pretty much the same. Try to eat dishes containing onions at least three times a week, and make sure that you let the onion sit for 5 to 10 minutes after you cut it open. If you apply heat too soon you will deactivate the thiopropanal sulfoxide, which is the substance in the onion that gives us the most heart benefits. And remember the more pungent the onion, the better it is for you.

Pomegranates

Pomegranates are packed with tons of phytochemicals like potassium, which is great for lowering your blood pressure. Studies also suggest that pomegranates can slow the progression of prostate cancer and reduce the risk of atherosclerosis. Instead of fighting with the little pulpy seeds to get your dose of pomegranate, try four to eight ounces of 100% juice several times a week. Be sure to stay away from juices with added sugar.

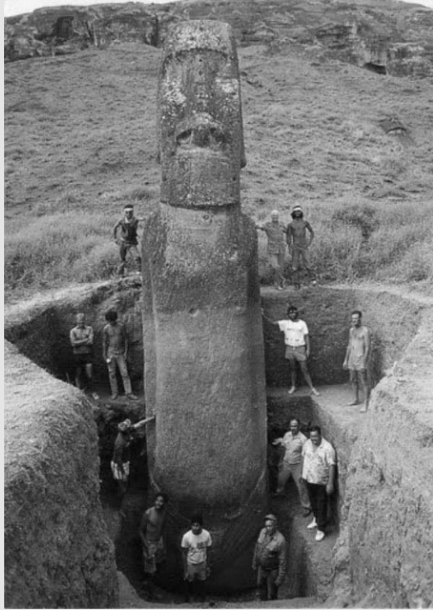


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