



February 2017



# Nutrition News

*Feeding the world with knowledge*

## Foods for Fighting Cancer

*Observing National Cancer Prevention Month with the American Institute for Cancer Research*



February is National Cancer Prevention Month and a good time to think about the connection between diet and cancer risk. Though no one food can prevent cancer by itself, research suggests several foods may be especially important for lowering risk. The American Institute for Cancer Research (AICR) has created a list of Foods That Fight Cancer™ focusing on foods that get asked about most often. This list includes—you guessed

it—plenty of fresh fruits and vegetables. Here's a few to include in your diet and the research compiled by AICR.

**Blueberries** pack antioxidant power thanks to phytochemicals such as anthocyanins and ellagic acid. These healthful compounds can lessen cancer-causing free radical damage to DNA. Blueberries also provide vitamin C, which can inhibit carcinogen formation, and dietary fiber, which may specifically help defend against cancer in the colon.

**Broccoli** and other cruciferous vegetables such as kale, Brussels sprouts and cauliflower contain glucosinolates, compounds that are broken down into isothiocyanates such as sulforaphane when eaten. Lab studies show these compounds can help ward off cancer by inhibiting enzymes that activate carcinogens and activating genes that suppress cancer cell growth. We've previously reported that broccoli may help in the fight against oral, liver, breast, skin and prostate cancers.

**Carrots** are a top source of vitamin A and contain carotenoids like beta-carotene, which are important for maintaining normal cell growth. A 2014 study suggests eating vegetables like carrots that are rich in beta-carotene and zeaxanthin, another carotenoid, may specifically help lower the risk of pancreatic cancer.

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## Featured Recipe



- **Spicy Sambal Dipping Sauce**

**Dark Green Leafy Vegetables** like spinach, kale and lettuce contain folate, fiber and phytochemicals like carotenoids and flavonoids. Greens are a source of antioxidant power, which can help protect cells from free radical damage.

**Grapes** contain the polyphenol resveratrol, mainly in the skin. Studies have shown resveratrol has anti-inflammatory power and can help prevent cancer formation and growth.

Other foods that made the cancer-fighting list include apples, cherries, coffee, cranberries, legumes, flaxseed, garlic, grapefruit, winter squash, tomatoes, walnuts and whole grains.

Snack on our **Spicy Sambal Dipping Sauce** with fresh broccoli, cauliflower and mini carrots for a punch of cancer-fighting nutrients!

## Beat Garlic Breath

*Apples, Lettuce and Mint Leaves Can Help Deodorize Breath*



What's the best way to cure a case of garlic breath? A stick of gum may be the obvious answer, but research published in the *Journal of Food Science* finds a fresh apple or simple salad may do the trick as well—with nutrients to boot!

Scientists from Ohio State University tested how well iceberg lettuce, Fuji apples, and spearmint leaves tamed bad breath after a garlic-heavy meal. Volunteers chewed fresh garlic for 25 seconds and then consumed one of the following: raw, cooked or juiced apples; raw or cooked lettuce; fresh or juiced mint leaves; green tea; or water as a control. Scientists measured the levels of breath volatiles (AKA smelliness) for the next hour.

All foods but green tea helped a little, but some were better than others. Compared to water, raw apple, raw lettuce and mint leaves lowered the concentration of breath volatiles by 50% or more in the following 30 minutes. Researchers suspect this has to do with the levels of phenolic compounds and polyphenol oxidase (PPO, an enzyme that causes browning) in the foods. These compounds likely interacted with the volatile compounds in garlic helping to tame bad breath. DNN readers know these same phenolic compounds also benefit health!

Bad breath aside, there are plenty of reasons to go heavy on the garlic. We've seen how garlic can help promote heart health, prevent bone loss, support immune function, and lower risk of stroke. Garlic breath may not be the most pleasant side effect, especially on upcoming Valentine's Day, but we say it's worth it for promoting your health. This Valentine's Day, serve your loved ones our **Garlic Ginger Fish with Fresh Vegetables** ...you just may want to add a salad or fresh apple to the menu!

## Stretching Benefits

### *Regular Static Stretching May Improve Heart Health*



We all know regular exercise is important for good health, but strenuous physical activity is not an option for everyone. For those who can't exercise due to age, recent surgery, or other debilitating conditions, regular stretching may help provide a fitness boost.

In a 2016 study published in the *American Journal of Physical Medicine & Rehabilitation*, Japanese researchers recruited 26 healthy yet fairly inactive young men to perform a whole-body static stretching routine for 40 minutes. Before and after stretching, researchers measured pulse-wave velocity (PWV), which is a measure of arterial stiffness, a risk factor for cardiovascular disease.

Post-stretching, arteries in the legs, arms, feet and hands saw a significant reduction in stiffness, with the greatest benefit coming 30 minutes after stretching. However, central arteries saw no change, meaning stretching won't completely fill in for aerobic exercise (so don't quit your usual running, swimming and cycling if you're able!) but a regular stretching routine is a good option when aerobic exercise just isn't an option.

**BONUS:** A study published in the *British Journal of Sports Medicine* found those who stretched before and after exercise enjoyed a 23% reduction in soreness — and a 25% drop in muscle/tendon injury risk.

## Healthy Heart, Healthy Brain

### *Cardiovascular Health Promotes Brain Function and Cognitive Aging*



We're in the midst of American Heart Month so there's no better time to address cardiovascular health. You know that healthy habits can help prevent heart attacks and stroke; now research shows the same lifestyle choices that keep your heart ticking may keep your brain thinking, too.

In a study published in the *Journal of the American Heart Association*, researchers from the University of Miami and Columbia University looked at how well 1,033 people in Northern Manhattan adhered to the American Heart Association's Life's Simple 7 ideal checklist: manage blood pressure, control cholesterol, reduce blood sugar, get active, eat better, lose weight and stop smoking. For the next six years, researchers routinely tested brain function through memory tests and cognitive exercises.

Healthy habits paid off: the higher the number of ideal lifestyle factors, the less the decline in cognitive function, specifically processing speed, episodic memory performance and executive function. The most influential factors were not smoking and maintaining ideal fasting glucose. Results suggest some age-related cognitive decline may be preventable by maintaining ideal cardiovascular health.

So what can you do to keep a healthy heart and brain? Don't smoke. Exercise regularly. Eat a healthy diet with plenty

of fresh fruit, vegetables, whole grains, beans, nuts, seeds, fish and fats from avocado and olive oil. Our [Rainbow Cauliflower & Broccoli with Garlic and Almonds](#) is a colorful side dish that will nourish both your heart and brain.

## Meatless Monday

*Interview with Registered Dietitian Diana Rice, Spokesperson for The Kids Cook Monday*



We sat down with Registered Dietitian Diana Rice, Spokesperson for The Kids Cook Monday, to talk about the history of The Monday Campaigns and discuss the benefits of going meatless at least one day of the week.

### Can you tell us a little about The Monday Campaigns?

The [Monday Campaigns](#) is a non-profit organization founded on a simple idea: to make Monday the day all health breaks loose! We started with the Meatless Monday campaign in 2003, but since that time have added campaigns to encourage additional health behaviors, such as exercising, cooking and eating with your family, quitting smoking and relieving stress. All of our work is based

on research demonstrating that Monday is the day we each have health on the brain and are most willing to introduce a healthy new behavior.

### What are some health benefits of practicing Meatless Monday?

The great thing about Meatless Monday is that it's a simple way to remember to eat less meat even if you don't plan to cut it out of your diet altogether. Diets that are low in meat and high in plant foods are associated with a number of health benefits such as reduced rates of obesity, heart disease, cancer and diabetes. Plus, eating less meat leaves more room in your diet for healthy nutrients like fiber and monounsaturated fats and also tends to be associated with meals that are lower in calories.

### Are there any other benefits to cutting out meat one day per week?

The other great thing about participating in Meatless Monday is that it's something people can do together. Many restaurants, schools and hospitals offer Meatless Monday specials to encourage their diners to go meatless together and it's also healthy habit that families can commit to together at home.

### What are some good protein sources to include in a meatless diet?

Just because you're skipping meat doesn't mean you have to eat tofu, although tofu can be very good! Other tasty sources of protein for your meatless meals include beans, lentils, nuts, whole grains, even many vegetables like broccoli and mushrooms. If you include many of these sources in one dish, the protein really adds up and you won't even miss the meat.

### Do you have a favorite recipe to make on Meatless Monday?

Personally, I like to switch it up every week and try something new. But for beginners, I like to recommend something like a veggie lasagna that's bound to be a crowd pleaser even without meat. There are hundreds of recipes available on the [Meatless Monday](#) website for newbies to explore!

### How can kids get involved in the kitchen on Mondays (or any day of the week)?

When kids learn to cook, they are more likely to enjoy healthy foods like vegetables. Meatless Monday has a sister

campaign called [The Kids Cook Monday](#) that encourages families to dedicate the first day of the week to cooking and eating together. The Kids Cook Monday's website has lots of family-friendly recipes as well as tips on how to cook with kids, such as cooking tasks for different age groups. The campaign's newsletter, [The Family Dinner Date](#), is delivered every Friday so families can prepare for their Monday meal. And all of the recipes are vegetarian, so The Kids Cook Monday can be Meatless Monday, too!

[Explore Dole's meatless recipes here!](#) Our [One Skillet Mushroom, Spinach and Kale Gnocchi](#) makes an easy and tasty weeknight dinner.

## Do We Need Supplements?

### *Supplement Use May Induce Heart and Liver Damage*



Let's talk about supplements. With the number of pills, powders and potions on the market, it can be tricky to decipher between health and hype. We've always promoted whole foods over supplements, and now there's even more research showing supplements aren't just unnecessary, they could be downright damaging.

You might have seen recent headlines from a 2016 study linking calcium supplements to heart damage. Published in the *Journal of the American Heart Association*, the study followed 2,742 people for ten years tracking calcium intake from food and supplements, and levels of coronary artery calcification (CAC), a marker of atherosclerosis and cardiovascular disease risk.

Though participants with the highest calcium intake ( $\geq 1453$  mg) compared to the lowest intake ( $< 434$  mg) had 27% lower risk for CAC, calcium supplement use was actually linked with a 22% *increased* risk for CAC. This isn't the first time we've seen this. In 2010 we reported on a study finding daily calcium pill takers were 30% more likely to suffer a heart attack compared to those taking a placebo. All this suggests loading up on calcium via supplements is no match for eating high-calcium foods such as white beans, tofu, collard greens and figs.

A 2017 study grabbing media attention has to do with supplement use and liver damage. Authors of the study, which is published in the journal *Hepatology*, estimate that about 20% of all cases of drug-induced liver damage can be traced to herbal and dietary supplements. Though commercial weight-loss products, botanical mixtures and herbal teas were among the worst offenders, simple vitamin and mineral supplements accounted for 7% of the damage seen in the studied population.

There are plenty of conditions and instances where supplement-use is warranted, but for most generally healthy people, food is all you need. Nutrients found in fruits, vegetables, unprocessed grains, nuts and other whole foods are perfectly packaged by nature and can provide all the nutrition your body requires.

For inspiration on how to deliciously include more fruits and vegetables foods into your diet, explore our [recipe collection](#) on [dole.com](#)!

# FEATURED RECIPE

## Spicy Sambal Dipping Sauce

### Ingredients:

- 1-½ cup plain low-fat Greek yogurt
- 3 tablespoons sambal sauce
- 3 tablespoons fresh lime juice
- ½ head DOLE® Broccoli
- ½ head DOLE Cauliflower
- 2 cups DOLE Mini Carrots



### Directions:

- STIR** together yogurt, sambal sauce and lime juice in small bowl.
- SERVE** with broccoli and cauliflower cut into florets plus mini carrots for dipping. Cover; refrigerate any leftovers.

**Makes:** 6 Servings

**Total Time:** 10 minutes

# EDITORIAL TEAM

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