



Nutrition News

Feeding the world with knowledge

Happy Green Saint Patrick's Day!



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Berries Battle Diabetes

Eating Berries Linked with Lower Risk of Type 2 Diabetes



Do you prefer blueberries, raspberries, blackberries or strawberries? If you love them all, we have good news: Eat more of any berry and you could lower your risk of type 2 diabetes by 18%, finds a study published in the *European Journal of Clinical Nutrition*.

Chinese researchers reviewed five major studies including a total of 194,019 people that looked at how eating berries affected risk of type 2 diabetes. For every 17 grams of berries eaten per day (that's about 13 blueberries, nine raspberries, two blackberries or one big strawberry) the risk of type 2 diabetes dropped by 5%.

Scientists attribute this to the anthocyanins found in berries (the phytonutrients that give berries their vibrant colors). Anthocyanins pack both antioxidant and anti-inflammatory power, which means they counteract free radical damage, manage inflammation and reduce blood glucose and insulin resistance. Anthocyanins can also aid in the metabolism of sugars and fats. All this can add up to lower risk of type 2 diabetes.

It's easy to add more berries to any meal of the day. Here are a few tasty ideas:

Breakfast: Top oatmeal with your favorite berries.

Lunch: Add berries to salads, like in our [Chef's Chopped Veggie Salad with Turkey and Berries](#).

Snack: Make berry salsa and serve with whole grain chips.

Dinner: Incorporate berries into stir-fry with vegetables and quinoa.

Dessert: Enjoy a fruit salad made with berries.

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Is More Expensive Food Healthier?

People Perceive Expensive Foods as Healthier than Cheaper Eats



Which is better for you: an energy bar that costs 99 cents or a bar that costs \$4? It may seem like a trick question, yet most people would be quick to answer the \$4 bar without any additional information. We've come to equate healthy food with expensive food, but does higher cost always mean higher nutrition?

Researchers from Ohio State University put this query to the test in a study published in the *Journal of Consumer Research*. In one trial, participants were asked how expensive a granola product would be. People who were told the granola was healthy thought it would be more expensive than those who were told it wasn't so healthy.

Digging further, another trial presented participants with different "Perfect Vision" trail mixes, all with different prices. Some people saw the label "Rich in Vitamin A for eye health" while others saw the label "Rich in DHA for eye health." Most people know what vitamin A is, so price didn't play a role in how healthy people thought it was. But with DHA, people thought the trail mix was healthier when it was more expensive, likely because most people had never heard of DHA.

This isn't always the best line of thinking while shopping. "Some of the healthiest foods in the supermarket are among the least expensive and most familiar," says Jenn LaVardera, MS, RD. "Bananas, oranges, carrots and broccoli can fit nearly any shopping budget and provide vitamins, minerals and phytonutrients important for health."

Another simple trick for saving money on nutritious foods: prepare and cook them yourselves. "If you're looking to save money and eat healthfully, choose foods like heads of cauliflower, loose Brussels sprouts and whole pineapple instead of the pre-cut versions," suggests Dole's Chef Mark Allison. Plus if you eat at home instead of out, you can control exactly what goes on your plate and help lower your risk of obesity, diabetes, and heart-disease.

Head lettuce is another nutrient-packed supermarket steal! Try our [Sautéed Green Leaf Lettuce with Honey and Balsamic Vinegar](#) for a new twist on this affordable salad green.

D Deficiency, Headaches Linked

Low Vitamin D Levels Are Associated with Frequent Headaches



Need another reason to go outside and enjoy some sunshine? Getting your daily vitamin D may help ward off nasty headaches, finds a study published in *Scientific Reports*.

Finnish researchers examined data from 2,601 male participants in a health study in eastern Finland. They looked at vitamin D levels in blood samples and reviewed questionnaires that determined how often participants suffered from headaches. Men with the lowest levels of vitamin D had over a twofold risk of chronic headache in comparison to the group with the highest levels.

Exactly how vitamin D may help prevent headaches is unclear, but researchers think it might have to do with expression of protective genes or suppression of pro-inflammatory genes. Other studies have linked vitamin D deficiency with

chronic tension-type headaches, possibly by causing muscle, bone and joint pain.

The best way to meet your daily D needs is to get out in the sun—just 15 minutes can do the trick, though it all depends on the time of day, where you live, the season and your skin tone. However, take caution with sun exposure as too many rays can be risky for your skin. As for foods, canned fatty fish like salmon and sardines are among the few sources. Milk and almond milk, juice and cereal are often fortified with vitamin D.

BONUS: Vitamin D may lift your mood. A Dutch study of over 1,200 seniors found 14% lower levels of vitamin D among those reporting more feelings of loneliness and listlessness.

Salads for Sport Performance

Nitrates May Benefit Muscle Fiber Composition in Sprinters



Most people don't think salad when they think fueling for exercise, but there may be good reason to go green before a workout, finds a study published in the journal *Frontiers in Physiology*.

Twenty-seven male Belgian university students completed a 5-week sprint interval cycling program. One-third of participants exercised in normal oxygen conditions and received a placebo supplement. All other participants trained in low oxygen conditions (similar to high-altitude), a practice thought to boost endurance. Eight of those riders received a placebo while nine received a nitrate supplement.

Researchers measured cyclists' muscle fibers composition before and after the program. There are two general types of muscle fibers: slow-twitch (type I, good for endurance) and fast-twitch (type II, good for sprinting). Further, there are type IIa and type IIx; type IIa are more efficient for exercise. After just five weeks of training, riders in the low-oxygen group receiving nitrates saw favorable changes in muscle fiber composition—a jump from 45% to 56% for type IIa fibers, a result that could very well boost performance in sprint events.

Don't get too excited, as this is just preliminary research using supplemental nitrates. Study author Professor Peter Hespel suggests in a press release to next investigate if eating nitrate-rich vegetables can also enable changes in muscle fibers. In the meantime, there are plenty of good reasons to add extra salad greens to your plate—even if you're not a serious athlete. The nitrates found in leafy greens might help reduce risk of glaucoma and green vegetables are among the best sources of vitamin K you can eat.

Try our [Apple Cider Farro Chopped Salad](#) for a dose of leafy greens plus whole grains for lasting energy.

BONUS: Drinking two cups of beet juice helped male cyclists improve endurance, enabling them to ride a minute and a half longer at high intensity.

How to Live to 100

Regions Dubbed “Blue Zones” May Hold Secrets to Longevity



Want to live to 100 and stay healthy along the way? Look to the Blue Zones—regions of the world with the highest number of centenarians—and you may be able to achieve just that.

Identified and studied by explorer Dan Buettner in partnership with *National Geographic*, the original Blue Zones—Ikaria, Greece; Loma Linda, California; Sardinia, Italy; Okinawa, Japan; and Nicoya, Costa Rica—have the highest concentrations of centenarians in the world. People living in these areas are reaching age 100 at rates ten times higher than in the United States. This begs the question: What are they doing that we aren't?

Though no two Blue Zone populations eat exactly the same foods or do exactly the same activities, Buettner and his team identified nine distinctive traits that give these communities a leg up on aging gracefully. These simple lifestyle factors, called the Power 9[®], may hold the secrets to longevity.

1. **Move naturally.** It's not all about hitting the gym. Incorporate physical activity into your day by taking the stairs, walking for errands, working in your garden or cleaning your home.
2. **Purpose.** Essentially, “why you wake up in the morning,” whether it's your job, family duties or volunteer work.
3. **Down shift.** Take time to de-stress. Chronic stress can steal years from your life.
4. **80% rule.** Don't overeat. Eat slowly, and stop eating when your stomach is 80% full.
5. **Plant slant.** Eat mostly plants like fruits, vegetables and beans and serve smaller portions of animal products.
6. **Wine @ five.** Enjoy wine in moderation. That's 1-2 glasses per day—and no “stocking up” for the weekend!
7. **Belong.** Take part in a faith-based community.
8. **Loved ones first.** Commit yourself to your family members.
9. **Right tribe.** Surround yourself with friends who support healthful behaviors.

Lifespan is influenced only 20% by genes; the rest is determined by lifestyle. Healthways, a Sharecare Company and a fellow partner in the ACLM Corporate Roundtable, has joined forces with Buettner to launch **Blue Zones Project[®]**, a community well-being improvement initiative designed to promote a healthy lifestyle by making the healthy choice the easy choice. Blue Zones Project encourages individuals to adopt Power 9 behaviors into their daily life. The initiative then helps communities support those healthy behaviors by working with grocery stores, restaurants, schools, churches, employers, and urban planning departments to create sustainable changes to environment, policy, and social networks. For more information about becoming a Blue Zones Project community, visit www.bluezonesproject.com.

Live by the Power 9 and you might just live a little longer.

Food Safety: Not As Seen on TV

Celebrity Chefs Forget Food Safety on Cooking Shows



Wish your recipes would turn out exactly like those on TV? Maybe not *exactly*—a study published in the *Journal of Nutrition Education and Behavior* finds television chefs rarely meet basic food safety standards on popular cooking shows.

Researchers from the University of Massachusetts Amherst asked five food safety experts to watch 39 episodes from 10 television cooking shows (sounds like a fun job!) and rate how well the chef practiced food safety standards. They looked for things like cross-contamination prevention, hand-washing, temperature control, and whether or not food safety was even mentioned.

The results: Don't believe everything you see on TV. Most of the food safety practices that raters were checking for were overlooked in more than 70% of episodes. Only 13% of shows even mentioned food safety. Hand-washing was foregone in 93% of episodes and 91% of episodes showed mishandling of raw food. Just 9% of shows demonstrated proper washing of fresh fruits and vegetables and 7% showed proper food temperatures.

In the U.S. alone, about 48 million cases of foodborne illness are reported each year. Half of the nation's population reports watching cooking shows, meaning television chefs are missing a huge opportunity to model and teach good food safety practices. Researchers recommend food safety experts work with the media to integrate these skills into popular shows. "Proper food safety is the single most important skill a chef can practice in his or her kitchen," explains Dole's Chef Mark Allison. "Safety shouldn't disappear with the magic of TV."

To help prevent cross-contamination and foodborne illness in your own kitchen, follow these ten tips:

1. Scrub hands with warm soapy water for 20 seconds before and after handling food.
2. Wash fresh fruits and vegetables and dry with a clean towel before eating.
3. Use separate cutting boards for produce and fish/poultry. Sanitize after use.
4. Defrost food in the refrigerator, in the microwave or under running water—never on the counter.
5. Keep the refrigerator temperature at 40° Fahrenheit or below.
6. Keep hot foods at 140° Fahrenheit or above. Cool to 40° Fahrenheit within two hours of serving.
7. Use a kitchen thermometer to check internal temperature of food before eating (for poultry it's a minimum of 165° Fahrenheit).
8. Store raw animal foods such as fish on the bottom of the refrigerator.
9. Sanitize counters and sinks after cooking.
10. Regularly clean the refrigerator from the inside out—a thorough cleaning four times a year is enough.

Get in the kitchen and practice your food safety skills by making [Dole's Sweet and Spicy Plantain Soup](#).

FEATURED RECIPE

Chef's Chopped Veggie Salad with Turkey and Berries

Ingredients:

- 1 package DOLE® Chef's Choice Tuscan Salad Kit
- 1 DOLE Carrot, peeled and roughly chopped
- 2 stalks DOLE Premium Celery Hearts, roughly chopped
- ½ cup DOLE Radishes, roughly chopped
- 1 cup DOLE Blueberries or Raspberries
- 20 oz. cooked turkey breast or chicken breast



Directions:

- PREPARE** salad kit according to package directions, using 1 salad dressing packet.
- ADD** carrot, celery, radishes, and berries. Toss gently to coat
- TOP** salad with turkey or chicken

Makes: 4 Servings

Total Time: 15 minutes

EDITORIAL TEAM

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