

# A Dash of Nutrition 2023



Dash Corpe is Registered Dietitian and nutritional coach, who volunteers as a menu advisor and nutrition educator at Hawai'i Meals on Wheels. In addition to helping certify our new kitchen partners, Dash contributes to our monthly client newsletter, writing articles and sharing tips about nutrition for our kūpuna clients. We are incredibly grateful for our partnership with Dash. Her expertise and knowledge of nutrition are invaluable to the kūpuna we serve.

To learn more about Dash, visit [adashofnutrition.com](https://adashofnutrition.com), or follow her on [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#).



# NUTRITION TIPS FOR DECREASED APPETITE



Nutrition | January 2023

2023

As we get older or go through medical treatments, appetite can decline. It is important to make sure we eat enough in these situations to keep up our strength. During these times, it can be quite difficult convincing yourself or a loved one to eat when appetite is low. In these cases, having some calorie rich foods can be very helpful so that every bite makes an impact.

## High Calorie Foods:

**Avocado:** Easy to blend into a smoothie for a creamy boost or spread onto toast with some salt.

**Eggs:** Versatile protein that is easy to digest. Egg salad with mayo is a higher calorie way to enjoy!

**Full-fat cottage cheese:** Easy to blend into a creamy consistency and can be added to tomato sauce for a protein-rich pink sauce.

**Olive oil/ butter:** Add to puree vegetables, soups, mashed potatoes.

**Peanut Butter:** Easy addition to graham crackers for a protein/calorie-rich snack.

**Desserts:** This a great time to enjoy desserts such as ice cream, cakes with frosting, cookies and more.

## Eat together!

When people don't have an appetite, it can be helpful to eat meals with others. Being social during meal times is important in every culture. This often takes the focus off our low appetite and we subconsciously eat more than if we were alone.

## High Calorie Smoothie Recipe:

½ cup full fat Greek yogurt  
2-3 tbsp protein powder  
2-4 tbsp whole milk (or soy)  
1 large banana or ½ cup chopped fruit (frozen is best)  
Handful raw veggies (spinach/kale) or sweet potato



## Tips:



### Cook some finely chopped or ground meats.

A senior can find larger pieces of meat unappetizing or feel overwhelmed easily. It's also easier to chew and digest. Try meatballs, tuna salad with mayonnaise or an Asian style ground pork.

### Serve small meals and many small snacks:

Provide 2-3 items in meals and maybe 1-2 items for a snack all in small portions. There is a greater sense of accomplishment when you can finish a small meal versus only making a dent in a larger one.

**Try not to pressure a loved one to eat:** This can often come off as nagging and make the meal time more stressful. If possible, give them the power to choose what they eat and keep meal times upbeat.

**Try to schedule meal times:** It can be easy to go through the day and forget to eat. Post a schedule or set reminders to eat - even if it's only a few bites, this can help your body get more nutrition throughout the day and build a routine.

**Drink your calories:** Try swapping out a meal for a smoothie/shake instead. It can make it a lot easier since you do not need to chew your food. It also digests quicker so you don't feel full as long.

# FEBRUARY IS AMERICAN HEART MONTH



Nutrition | February 2023



Our heart is an amazing organ. Did you know that it beats an average of 115,000 times each day? It also pumps 2,000 gallons of blood daily as well. To keep it functioning at its best, lifestyle factors such as exercise and diet play a huge role. You might wonder how exactly the food we eat protects both our heart and cardiovascular system?



## What does the research say?

A large study in 2017 analyzed many smaller studies and found that a higher fruit and vegetable consumption had a **17% less risk** of developing cardiovascular disease.

**How does it reduce risk?** Fruits and vegetables contain "polyphenols" that specifically reduce blood pressure by increasing a compound in our blood stream called nitric oxide. This relaxes blood vessels and improves blood flow while reducing pressure on the arterial and vessel walls. Many of these polyphenols also help reduce inflammation in the cardiovascular system to limit plaque build-up which keeps blood flowing to the heart muscle as well as the entire body.

Having optimal blood flow is very important so all tissues receive adequate oxygen so we have energy to move, think clearly and improve our metabolism.

**How much do we need to eat?** I recommend at least 6 handful amounts of fruits & veg per day. A study showed a significant improvement in vascular function and reduction in cholesterol when eating this much most days of the week.

## High Polyphenol Drinks for Heart Health:

- **Greens + Berry Smoothie**
- **Veggie Powders**
- **Cocoa powder** (*darker the better!*)
- **Green Tea & Mamaki Tea**
- **Hibiscus Tea** (*Also reduces blood pressure!*)



## Tips for eating more vegetables:

- **Green smoothies** (ex. cauliflower, broccoli) which both blend well and have a mellow taste when mixed with fruit.
- **Avocado** based chocolate pudding for dessert. It's creamy and full of healthy fats that can lower cholesterol. It is a surprising way to make a decadent dessert!
- **Whole wheat muffins** with shredded zucchini or carrots.
- **Toss in spinach and/or mushrooms** into pasta dishes. Tomato sauce also counts!
- **Try veggie noodles** mixed into your pasta dish.
- **Mix in some cauliflower rice** into your rice dish. You don't need to give up rice altogether, but you can "boost" it with some vegetables pretty easy with frozen cauliflower rice.
- **Sandwiches:** Add lettuce, cucumbers, tomatoes or sprouts.
- **Make veggie cheese quesadillas** with beans, bell peppers, onions and spinach.
- **Puree some squash or white beans** and add to chicken noodle soup for a boost in veg!
- **Make a chili** with carrot, sweet potato or butternut squash with beans, tomatoes and bell peppers.

# MARCH IS NATIONAL NUTRITION MONTH



Nutrition | March 2023



This month we are celebrating national nutrition month which is an annual campaign to highlight the importance of making smart food choices, develop better eating habits and maintain regular physical activity. This year's theme is "Fuel for the Future" to bring a focus to how the food and drinks we consume today will fuel our body and mind for the future ahead. This message also brings importance to improve sustainability in our food system for future generations.

## ● Tips for Fueling for your future ●



**Plan meals ahead of time:** If you receive delivered meals, plan out which meals might not be covered like breakfast or dinner. Before going grocery shopping, take inventory of what food you or your loved one already has and build simple meals around those items. For example, if you have eggs, identify some easy staples to have with it such as whole wheat english muffins, spinach and mozzarella for a quick and healthy breakfast sandwich which can be prepped ahead of time and reheated in the microwave easily.



**Try new recipes:** Variety is the spice of life and can actually help us get more balanced nutrition since different foods contain different nutrients. Find new salad toppings like red cabbage, pumpkin seeds, soy beans or even a new dressing to make it interesting. Research some new simple recipe ideas and incorporate a new one every 1-2 weeks. This helps us find new foods we may not have tried or simply introduces us to new flavors making meals interesting again.



**Get creative with leftovers:** Use some creativity to repurpose leftovers to reduce boredom and food waste. Turn leftover chicken and vegetables into a soup or stew. Add leftover meats and veggies to cooked pasta with a marinara or garlic olive oil sauce for a new dish. Top with some fresh parsley and parmesan for a boost of flavor. You can also turn leftover rice and vegetables into a veggie fried rice - top with an egg and you have another balanced meal.

## ● Tips for Eating Sustainably ●

**Eat with the environment in mind** by enjoying more plant based meals or by simply reducing the portions of animal meats we eat often. By shifting our focus to plants, we help reduce water usage and deforestation.

**Eat fish sustainably:** find alternatives to mahi-mahi, swordfish, bigeye/ bluefin tuna and wahoo since these varieties are decreasing in numbers or have been caught using dangerous methods. You can check the [Monterey Bay Aquarium Seafood Watch](https://www.montereybayaquarium.org/seafood-watch/) website for more information.

**Buy local fruits and vegetables** when you can. These do not require long shipping routes from the mainland and central or south America.

**Purchase foods with less packaging** and less plastic. Buying in bulk can help with this!

Buy purchasing foods that are more sustainable, we ensure that our future generations will be able to enjoy family recipes for years to come!



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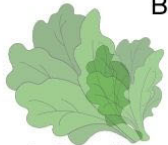
# NUTRITION FOR LONGEVITY

Nutrition | April 2023



Longevity refers to a long life free from disease and illness. One of the keys to achieving longevity is maintaining a healthy diet. Cardiovascular disease is the most prevalent chronic disease in America, so it makes sense to prioritize foods that protect our cardiovascular system as well as improve the health of our entire body. While these foods can improve our health, it's also important to remember other lifestyle factors play an important role too!

Below are some foods lifestyle choices that can help you achieve this goal:



## ● ● ● Top Foods to Support Longevity: ● ● ●

- 1. Berries** such as blueberries, strawberries, and raspberries are rich in antioxidants which help to reduce inflammation and prevent cell damage caused by free radicals. They are also low in calories and high in fiber which makes them an excellent addition to any diet.
- 2. Nuts** such as almonds, walnuts, and pistachios are packed with healthy fats, protein, and fiber. They are also loaded with vitamins and minerals that help to improve heart health and reduce the risk of chronic diseases.
- 3. Leafy Greens** like spinach, kale, and collard greens are packed with vitamins, minerals, and antioxidants that help to reduce inflammation and promote heart health. They are also low in calories and high in fiber which makes them an excellent addition to any diet.
- 4. Whole Grains** such as brown rice, quinoa, and whole wheat are rich in fiber, vitamins, and minerals. They improve the health of our gut microbiome and reduce the risk of chronic diseases such as heart disease, diabetes, and cancer.
- 5. Fatty Fish** such as salmon, mackerel, and sardines are packed with omega-3 fatty acids which help to reduce inflammation and improve heart health. They are also loaded with vitamins and minerals that help to promote brain health and reduce the risk of chronic diseases.
- 6. Fermented Foods** including kimchi, sauerkraut, natto and kombucha improve the gut microbiome which enhances our health by also decreasing inflammation and improves our immune system protecting us from illnesses.



## Reduce These Foods:

- 1. Reduce saturated fats** (mainly from animal meats). These promote more inflammation in the body which may damage cells, DNA and cause plaque build-up in our arteries.
- 2. Reduce refined sugars.** These can be ok in moderation, however too many sweets on a regular basis can promote higher triglycerides, increase diabetes risk, weight gain and fatty liver disease.
- 3. Reduce ultra processed foods** such as chips, soda, hot dogs, spam, sugary cereals, candies, cakes.. These often have many nutrients removed, especially fiber making them less nutritious & filling.



## Important Lifestyle Factors:

**Get enough sleep.** This is usually about 7 hours per night for most people. Try to find a regular time to fall sleep. Adequate rest allows our body to repair damaged cells and regulate hormones.

**Exercise** such as walking, jogging and resistance training slow the aging process by repairing DNA, reducing chronic inflammation, improving sleep and maintaining good mobility. Regular exercise >150 total minutes per week is best!

# BENEFITS OF LOCAL PRODUCE

Nutrition | May 2023



Hawaii is known for its beautiful beaches, warm weather and diverse cuisine. What you may not realize is that it is also home to fresh produce year round that boasts more nutrients than many grown in commercial farms elsewhere. Consuming local produce provides numerous benefits for both your health and the environment.



## • • • Eat Local! • • •

- **Nutrient Density:** Local produce is harvested at its peak ripeness allowing more vitamins, minerals and other beneficial nutrients to develop in the plant. This is especially true for Hawaii's nutrient-dense volcanic soil! Consuming nutrient-dense foods can support overall health and reduce risk for chronic diseases. Many unknown, yet beneficial plant compounds cannot be simply made up in a vitamin supplement, so that's why it's important to eat more of our locally grown produce whenever you can.
- **Sustainability:** Supporting local farms reduces the carbon footprint associated with importing produce from other states or countries. Additionally, local produce often requires less packaging which helps reduce waste locally. Investing in our local farms is an investment in our future to reduce our dependence on mainland or foreign food.
- **Seasonal Variety:** When we eat foods that are in season, we will then eat a greater variety of produce throughout the year and in turn have a more diverse diet. This ensures we maximize our exposure to many different antioxidants, vitamins and minerals making it more likely that we will get all the nutrients our body needs.
- **Flavor:** Yes, local foods may even have more flavor! Hawaii has many unique fruits and vegetables with some of them being grown from different seeds that have been brought from other areas of the globe. We have some delicious heirloom tomato varieties that cannot be found in other parts of the world which makes it special to keep them alive here. Commercial varieties grown on large farms are often grown to resist disease but may lack flavor. Consuming fruits and vegetables with more flavor can make healthy eating enjoyable and sustainable long term.

## Best ways to buy local produce:



There are many ways to support local farms. For example, getting produce directly from a farmer's market allows profits to go straight to that farm. Additionally, you can purchase a "CSA" box from a local farm which allows them to give you a variety of produce that is in season. This is a fantastic way to try new produce that you haven't had before and allows farms to have reliable income from these subscription services. If you are interested in learning more, visit the Hawaii Farm Bureau for a listing of farmer's markets and [gofarmhawaii.org](http://gofarmhawaii.org) to see a listing of all local farms who may be providing monthly produce via CSA boxes!

Many local produce is now making its way into the school system, Hawaii Food Bank and local hospitals where Hawaii Meals on Wheels purchases a large amount of its meals.

# THE EFFECTS OF SELENIUM ON OUR HEALTH



Nutrition | June 2023



Selenium is an essential mineral that plays a key role in many bodily functions. It is a powerful antioxidant that helps to reduce oxidative stress and inflammation in the body. This mineral is incorporated into proteins to make selenoproteins, which are important antioxidant enzymes. There are over 25 selenoproteins in the body, and they are involved in various physiological processes, including DNA synthesis and protection from oxidative damage which can help protect us from chronic illnesses.

## Selenium has been linked to a number of health benefits:

- ✓ **Improved immune function:** Selenium helps to support immune function by enhancing the activity of white blood cells and other immune cells. It has shown to be useful in reducing inflammation and fighting off viral infections.
- ✓ **Reduced risk of certain cancers:** Selenium has been shown to have a protective effect against certain types of cancer, including prostate, lung, and colorectal cancer. It helps to protect cells from damage, inhibit tumor growth, and reduce inflammation.
- ✓ **Improved thyroid function:** Selenium is necessary for the production of thyroid hormones, which help to regulate metabolism and energy levels. It plays a crucial role in thyroid hormone metabolism and helps the thyroid gland to function properly.
- ✓ **Improved cardiovascular health:** Selenium helps to reduce inflammation and oxidative stress, which are both risk factors for cardiovascular disease. It helps to improve blood flow, reduce plaque buildup in the arteries, and protect the heart from damage.
- ✓ **Boost cognitive function:** Some studies have suggested that selenium may help to improve cognitive function and reduce the risk of cognitive decline. It has shown to be useful in reducing oxidative stress, inflammation, and improving blood flow to the brain.

Too much selenium can be harmful. High levels of selenium can cause nausea, vomiting, hair loss, and other health problems. Therefore, it is important to consume selenium in moderation and not exceed the recommended daily intake. The recommended daily intake of selenium for adults is 55 micrograms per day which you can get from food safely.

## Best food sources of Selenium:



**Brazil Nuts:** Very high concentration and just 2 nuts per day meets your maximum goal.



**Seafood:** Fish and shellfish like tuna, halibut, sardines, and shrimp.



**Meat & Poultry:** Beef, chicken and turkey are food sources. Organ meats are even higher.



**Grains:** Whole wheat breads, brown rice and oats.



**Dairy products:** Milk and yogurt

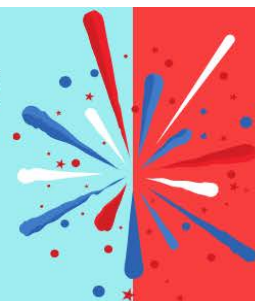


**Eggs:** Each egg contains 15mcg of selenium (~25% of your daily goal)


QUESTIONS? CONTACT DASH CORPE, RD  
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# HEALTHY FOODS TO EAT THIS SUMMER


Nutrition | July 2023





Summer is a fantastic time of year when many healthy fruits and veggies are, cheaper, fresher and in season! Many of these seasonal favorites also provide wonderful health benefits. A common theme from this list is that they all support heart health and boost antioxidant intake to protect our body from chronic illnesses. I hope you take the time to get more of these healthy and very tasty foods into your meals this summer!


 **Avocados** - high in fiber and potassium. The high fiber and healthy fat component helps reduce blood sugar spikes when added to a meal. The potassium helps reduce blood pressure as well. Definitely have more of these for heart health!


 **Banana** - also a good source of potassium and magnesium to help lower blood pressure. If you are watching your blood sugar, try having an apple banana instead or eat them when they are a little under ripe since less of the fibers have been converted to sugar.


 **Beets** - a nutritional powerhouse that improves blood flow throughout the body. Rich in micronutrients and ideal for those who are active since it has been shown to improve endurance activities like running, cycling and swimming.


 **Bell Peppers** - high in vitamin C and other antioxidants that can help reduce risk for cancers, Parkinson's and Alzheimer's (among many others). So versatile, they can be added to many dishes or eat them raw with hummus.


 **Berries** - my favorite! They are high in fiber and most importantly have been shown in many studies to reduce oxidative stress in the body which protects us from inflammatory diseases and supports our brain health. Eat more of these for longevity!

 **Cherries (and other stone fruits)** - high in fiber, vitamins and antioxidants that help reduce inflammation in the body. Tart cherries significantly reduce stress and inflammation after a intense physical activity too!

 **Mangoes** - these are great for our immune system and provide nutrients that support eye health. A study in 2020 from UC Davis also found that eating 4 small mangoes per week for 4 months can reduce the appearance of wrinkles in older women.

 **Okra** - rich in antioxidants that improve heart and brain health. It can naturally lower cholesterol since the sticky substance inside binds with cholesterol during digestion which helps remove it from the body.

 **Tomatoes** - love these for their potassium! Nutrients in tomatoes become more concentrated in tomato sauces or juices. Lycopene is one of these nutrients that become concentrated and has been shown to reduce prostate cancer.

 **Zucchini** - high in certain antioxidants that improve eye health, heart health and digestion.

## Summer Fruit Salad:

2 cups Blueberries  
1 cup raspberries  
2 cups red grapes, halved  
1 pint strawberries  
3 kiwi, sliced  
2 mango, diced  
3 cups pineapple chunks

Optional Honey Lime Dressing:  
¼ cup honey  
2 tsp lime zest  
1.5 Tbsp lime juice

Mix all the fruits together and top with honey lime dressing for a flavor boost!

Makes ~12 servings







# TIPS FOR STAYING HYDRATED IN THE HEAT OF SUMMER

Nutrition | August 2023



As we age, it can become more difficult for our bodies to retain water, which is why it's important for older adults to make a conscious effort to stay hydrated. Our sense of thirst also declines with age, so older adults should also remember to drink even when they don't feel thirsty. Proper hydration is essential for maintaining healthy body functions and avoiding dehydration-related health problems.



Here are some of the best ways for older adults to stay hydrated:



- **Drink plenty of water throughout the day:** Water is the best way to hydrate your body. Older adults should aim to drink at least 8-10 glasses of water per day. It's also a good idea to keep a water bottle nearby to remind yourself to drink water throughout the day.
- **Eat foods with high water content:** Most fruits and vegetables have high water content, which can help to keep you hydrated. Examples include watermelon, cucumbers, strawberries, and grapefruit. Soups and broths can also be a good source of hydration.
- **Drink water before, during, and after exercise or physical activity:** As we age, it's important to stay active to maintain muscle and bone strength. However, physical activity can also lead to dehydration. Make sure to drink water before, during, and after exercise to stay properly hydrated.
- **Avoid sugary drinks and excessive caffeine:** Sugary drinks like soda and juice can dehydrate the body. Caffeine, which is found in coffee, tea, and some soft drinks, can also have a diuretic effect and lead to dehydration. It's best to limit your intake of these beverages and opt for water instead. If you prefer to have flavored water, try a sugar-free or low sugar electrolyte drink such as Gatorade, Propel, Body Armor or Pedialyte.
- **Monitor urine color:** One way to tell if you're properly hydrated is to check the color of your urine. Pale yellow urine indicates proper hydration, while dark yellow or amber-colored urine can indicate dehydration.
- **Consult with a healthcare professional:** If you're taking medication, it's important to be aware of any side effects that may affect hydration levels. Some medications can cause increased urination, which can lead to dehydration.





# STAYING STRONG AS WE AGE

Nutrition | September 2023

Protein

As we get older, it can be hard to build and maintain muscle without some good nutrition and weight training strategies. Typically, we lose about 0.5%-2% of our muscle each year after age 50. Eating enough protein is an important way to help minimize these losses as we age. So how do you know if you are getting enough?

## How much protein do you need?

Most adults need about 0.36g protein per pound of body weight, however over the age of 50, this increases to 0.55g protein per pound if you are at a normal weight. Meeting this goal will decrease the risk for muscle loss.

- For example, a man who is 175 lbs would need about 95g protein per day
- A woman at 120 lbs would need at least 65g per day

If you have certain medical conditions such as kidney disease, then you may need to eat less. Unsure of your goals? Reach out to your doctor or dietitian for individualized guidance.

## What are some tips to increase protein?

Eat about 20-30g protein with each meal and include a protein snack between each meal.

- Include cheeses (7g protein per ounce)
  - Cottage cheese, mozzarella, cheddar, parmesan can be added to salad or as a protein snack. Try cottage cheese with fruit or in pancakes or blended and added to marinara.
  - For a lower sodium cheese, try swiss cheese which is great in sandwiches.
- Eggs (6g protein each)
  - Hard boil several eggs to have as snacks or add to salad or slice for sandwiches. If making scrambled eggs, try adding cheese or low sodium ham to boost protein.
- Meat/chicken/fish (7g per ounce)
  - Have at least 3oz per meal which is about the size of a deck of cards.
  - Have some canned tuna or chicken on hand to add to salads or make into sandwiches.
  - Aim for fish 3x per week for a healthy and lean protein source.
- Protein shakes (~20g per scoop or ~20-30g per container)
  - Try to find a high protein shake you enjoy the taste of and have ½ cup for a snack.
  - Premier Protein, Core Power, Orgain, Ensure Max and Boost Max are all widely available
- Beans (8-10g protein per ½ cup)
  - Add chickpeas to pasta or have hummus with crackers and veggies.
  - Make a 3 bean soup to have as a side dish or entree.

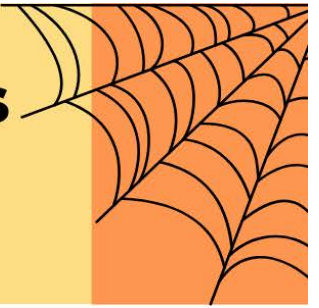


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# IMPROVE HEALTH WITH LESS ADDED SUGARS

Nutrition | October 2023



We have all been hearing about the negative health effects of consuming too much added sugar, however I do receive questions about “how much is too much?” The official recommendations by the American Heart Association is 25g per day for women and 38g per day for men. This recommendation is based on percentage of calorie intake, so this number would decrease if you are consuming less calories.

## Why are added sugars unhealthy?

They are often added to processed foods to enhance flavor and sometimes cause us to eat more of that product than we would otherwise. This can negatively impact health by leading to unwanted weight gain because these foods don't trigger our body's satiety cues as well as whole foods do. High sugar intake is also related to increased triglycerides which can lead to hardening of the arteries and thickening of the arterial walls which increases risk for stroke and heart attacks. *Eat moderate amounts of those Halloween treats this season!*

## Surprising food products that are high in added sugars:

- Some low-fat or regular flavored yogurts can be very high in added sugars. For example Yoplait yogurt contains 13g of added sugars which is half the daily recommendation for women.
- Ketchup contains 4g added sugar per tablespoon which can add up for people who love ketchup with their food.
- Spaghetti sauce contains 4-10g of added sugar per ½ cup in many popular brands.
- Granola is often sweetened with honey or other types of sugar to enhance the flavor, but some top brands can have upwards of 10-15g of added sugar per ¾ cup.
- Protein bars have grown in popularity because they are promoted as a healthier weight loss friendly food, however it depends on the product. Some candy bars have up to 20g of added sugars and look more like candy bars.



## Low Sugar Recommendations:

Luckily due to changing consumer demands for healthier foods, you can find products with lower or no added sugar. I like Chobani “less sugar” or zero sugar yogurt products, Rao's Marinara has no added sugar and Aloha Bar is great for a protein bar. Look for <8g added sugar per serving of snack foods.

## Do we always need to limit added sugar?

Sometimes added sugars are actually helpful. For example, if you or a loved one has a poor appetite and lost weight, it can be beneficial to help increase calorie intake. Sugars tend to digest quickly and not lead to feelings of fullness as much as other nutrients, so it can be a handy source of calories, especially if they enjoy sweets.



# BOOST HEALTH WITH ANTIOXIDANTS

Nutrition | November 2023



Looking for ways to boost health naturally? Eating more antioxidants found naturally in food is a great way to do this! Unfortunately, many of us do not get enough of these in our meals on a daily basis. Many people believe we need to take additional supplements or buy expensive juices to achieve good health. **The truth is, if we include foods naturally high in antioxidants, then we don't need to rely on expensive products to be healthy!** In Hawaii, we are lucky to be surrounded by superfoods all year round! Eating these foods on a regular basis will offer numerous health benefits including reduced cancer risk, better cardiovascular health, lower inflammation, improved gut health and reduced risk for cognitive decline. The key here is we need to have some of these foods every day! You can pick a few to get started with and I hope you find some you enjoy.

## Which foods are best to start with?

1. Start by having high antioxidant foods with longer shelf life so you can enjoy them longer. Dried blueberries are available year round. **Berries contain a very high amount of antioxidants, even more in their dried form!** Great addition to trail mix, oatmeal or even on their own.
2. Eat more dark, leafy greens. **Darker greens usually contain more antioxidants** and in fact it comes directly from the green color itself. If you cook leafy greens, do so gently to preserve the antioxidants since over-cooking can destroy them. A light sauté is perfect or if you are tossing kale into a soup, wait until the end to add it. Include some fresh baby spinach with salad greens or add in an egg omelet. Kale can also be softened by adding a vinaigrette hours or the day before eating for a fresh kale salad.
3. Enjoy green tea more often. Catechins found in green tea have been shown to reduce risk for cancer, heart disease and liver disease. Drinking green tea long term has also shown to be protective against diabetes and high cholesterol. **Having 1 cup of freshly brewed tea per day is enough to reap these benefits!** If you take iron supplements or have a low iron levels, try drinking green tea separately from your supplement or high iron meals since green tea can reduce iron absorption.

## Holiday Foods High in Antioxidants:

1. Dark Chocolate
2. Apples
3. Cranberry sauce
4. Sweet Potato (especially Okinawan!)
5. Pecans
6. Squash or pumpkin
7. Pomegranate

## Pomegranate Ginger Spritzer

Combine the following in a pitcher and refrigerate overnight:

1. 1/2 cup sliced fresh ginger
2. 1 medium lime, sliced
3. 3 cups pomegranate juice
4. 1/2 cup orange juice
5. 3 cups club soda



*Try this!*

# Create a Healthier Holiday Treat!



The holidays are full of sugary snacks that can cause problems for our health if we eat too much. Making a healthy treat is a great gift for family and friends for the holidays! Use nutrient dense foods such as nuts, dark chocolate, seeds, and dried fruits which add so many great nutrients that can actually improve our health!



## Nuts

Eat a variety of nuts to maximize your nutrient intake. These are excellent sources of healthy fats, fiber, antioxidants and a variety of vitamins and minerals.

When eaten in moderation (a small handful daily), they can also support a healthy weight. They are excellent for people who need to control blood sugar since they are low in sugar.

Nuts have also been shown to help our bodies fight illnesses and decrease inflammation. This is great for heart health and healthy aging!

## Dark Chocolate

Dark chocolate has a lot less sugar than milk chocolate making it a healthier choice. To build a healthy trail mix, use dark chocolate chips to mix easily with the other ingredients.

Find a dark chocolate that is at least 70% cocoa to limit sugar and unhealthy fats. This type of chocolate has been shown to improve memory and cognition too!

Dark chocolate also contains a good amount of manganese, a nutrient that supports collagen production which helps skin look young and stay healthy.



## Dried Fruits

Loaded with antioxidants and sweetness which adds to a tasty trail mix. Choose a variety including dried cherries or cranberries sweetened with apple juice for less sugar.

For a tropical twist, include dried pineapple and mango. Dried mulberries or figs can be a great choice for additional iron.

## Recipe

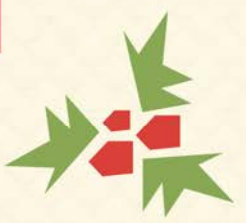
\*Double or triple this recipe for larger batches.

- Recipe:
- 1.5 cups Almonds
  - 1 cup walnuts
  - 1 cup pecans
  - 1/2 cup cashews
  - 1/2 cup dried fruits
  - 1/2 cup dark chocolate chips

Toast walnuts and pecans in a 350 degree oven for 5 minutes and allow to cool.

Mix all ingredients together and separate into preferred portions.

Optional: Include 1/2 cup of coconut flakes for even more manganese!



For additional information, visit [todaysdietitian.com](http://todaysdietitian.com), [eatright.org](http://eatright.org) & [choosemyplate.gov](http://choosemyplate.gov)

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