

Prevent Cancer by Eating Berries

It has been well established that a diet high in fruits and vegetables is helpful in preventing many diseases including cancer.

What has also been feverishly investigated is the effects of berries on the body. Some researchers have studied the health benefit of specific berries while others have focused on isolating the health-promoting bioactive compounds that give berries their claim to fame.

Some of the known cancer-preventive agents present in berries include vitamins A, C, and E and folic acid; calcium and selenium; beta-carotene, alpha-carotene, and lutein; phytosterols such as beta-sitosterol and stigmasterol; triterpene esters; and phenolic molecules such as anthocyanins, flavonols, proanthocyanidins, ellagitannins, and phenolic acids. Berries contain high levels of a diverse range of phytochemicals, most of which are phenolic molecules.

If you're not familiar with the majority of these compounds then don't worry. They are all more or less different types of antioxidants. That berries exhibit potent antioxidative properties is widely accepted, but their biological properties extend beyond antioxidation.

In fact, berries also exhibit anti-inflammatory properties, are able to inhibit cell proliferation, modulate cell cycle arrest, and induce apoptosis (programmed cell death) in cancer cells with little or no negative effects in normal cells.

These traits make berries an awesome addition to any health-minded diet.

For example, a 2006 study in the Journal of Agricultural and Food Chemistry showed that blackberry, black raspberry, blueberry, cranberry, red raspberry, and strawberry extracts inhibit the growth of human oral, breast, colon, and prostate cancer cells.

In 2006, the journal Nutrition and Cancer published a 6-month cancer-preventive pilot study that was conducted by administering 32g or 45g (female and male, respectively) of freeze dried black raspberry powder (BRB) to patients with Barrett's esophagus (BE), a pre-cancerous esophageal condition.

BE's importance lies in the fact that it confers a 30-40-fold increased risk for the development of esophageal adenocarcinoma, a rapidly increasing and extremely deadly form of cancer. At the time of the publication, interim findings from 10 patients with BE supported the finding that daily consumption of BRB promoted reductions in two markers of oxidative stress.

So it goes without saying that berries are a blessing. As a rule of thumb, any food (or berry) that has a deep colourful hue will most likely be a high source of antioxidants. The key is to incorporate a wide variety of different colours in order to benefit from all their respective antioxidant properties.

Add berries to your smoothies, to your morning cereal and salads, or enjoy them on their own. Here's a berry-licious recipe to get your taste buds started:

Berry Fusion Breakfast

½ cup each of blueberries, raspberries, strawberries, blackberries

¼ cup goji berries, soaked (optional)

4 tbsp shredded dried coconut

1 cup rice or nut milk of choice

•combine berries in a bowl, sprinkle coconut on top, and top with milk.

Nutrition Expert, Yuri Elkaim and his groundbreaking book, Eating for Energy, have helped thousands of people in over 80 countries regain control of their health and weight. Watch his new You Tube Video and discover a delicious GREEN smoothie recipe that will keep you energized and nourished. For more on his revolutionary healthy eating book visit <http://www.EatingforEnergy.ca>.

About the Author

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