

# 7 HEART HEALTHY FOODS FOR LONGEVITY



# 7 Heart Healthy Foods For Longevity

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|   |           |
|---|-----------|
| <b>INTRODUCTION</b>                           | <b>2</b>  |
| <b>#1: BLUEBERRIES</b>                        | <b>3</b>  |
| <b>#2: AVOCADOS</b>                           | <b>5</b>  |
| <b>#3: WALNUTS (AND OTHER NUTS AND SEEDS)</b> | <b>7</b>  |
| <b>#4: LEAFY GREENS AND GREEN VEGETABLES</b>  | <b>9</b>  |
| <b>#5: DARK CHOCOLATE (COCOA &amp; CACAO)</b> | <b>12</b> |
| <b>#6: SALMON</b>                             | <b>14</b> |
| <b>#7: APPLE</b>                              | <b>16</b> |
| <b>CONCLUSION</b>                             | <b>18</b> |
| <b>FREE EBOOK OFFER</b>                       | <b>18</b> |

### **Introduction**

Do you wish to live a long, healthy life? We are all aware that we can't live forever but we can take good care of our health by nurturing our bodies the best ways possible which will naturally help us extend our lives.



According to researchers, experts have identified people who tend to live longer and healthier lives are consistent in eating meals that help to nourish the body for maximum health. In other words, they only

consume foods that are beneficial to the body and avoid foods that are processed, packaged or those that contain additives.

Though there are chances that genetics may predispose us to many kinds of diseases, we still have control over our health and dietary choices. Although there are no guarantees about how our health might be when we age or how long we're going to live, there are effective steps that could be taken to live a healthier and more enjoyable life. There are 7 heart healthy foods that promote longevity which will be discussed below.

### 7 Heart Healthy Foods For Longevity



#### **#1: Blueberries**

Blueberries have been described as “superfruits” as they are capable of blocking as well as reversing most of the aging consequences. They are incredible anti-aging food that keeps the brain healthy by boosting mental health. The dark hues present in berries shows their high antioxidant content, which ward off free radicals that lead to aging and stop new cells from growing in order to stay healthy.

Besides being a powerhouse sources of antioxidants which delivers multiple benefits, blueberries also possess the ability to bring positive impacts to multiple aging processes. Recent studies have shown that blueberry extracts can significantly increase life span.

## 7 Heart Healthy Foods For Longevity

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Blueberries also deliver maximum nutrition for minimum calories. With regular consumption, belly fat could also be reduced.

In comparison to other fruits, blueberries contain less sugar so it is less likely to affect your insulin levels, making them a great option for a fast guiltless snack. As they are low-glycemic fruits, they help to keep your insulin levels balanced as well as keep you focused. These fruits are also packed with fiber which keeps your digestion on track, maintain your cholesterol levels, and develop a healthy weight necessary for optimal longevity.

Berries of all kinds are healthy which contain concentrated amounts of phytochemicals which help to fight heart disease, DNA damage, metabolic syndrome and even cancer. As a result, blood vessels will be more flexible which can help avoid the risks of developing a heart disease. Rather than the whole fruit, it's the particular flavonoid components of blueberries which deliver so many health benefits. These compounds are able to enhance high blood pressure, decrease cardiovascular risk factors as well as enable the brain to function well even after stroke. Recent studies have proven that blueberries help to prevent brain deterioration as well as protect memory-associated regions of the brain from possible oxidant and inflammatory damages.

Blueberries are becoming a critical element of a science-based longevity program due to their richness in anthocyanins and pterostilbenes. Researchers have discovered new data showing that blueberries are capable of delaying aging and can lead to longevity.



### **#2: Avocados**

People do not consume avocados mainly because of their unique taste, but also because of their impressive heart health benefits. Avocados represent one of the most nutrient-dense foods which provide health-boosting nutrients such as protein, magnesium, vitamin E, B6 vitamins and folic acid. Besides, they are a good source of anti-inflammatory fats that minimizes aging in the body.

According to a dietitian in Washington, avocados are rich in mono and poly unsaturated fats which enable energy to be generated easily. Consequently, blood cholesterol levels and risk of heart disease can be minimized. This fruit does not only help to reduce bad cholesterol, but also boost levels of good cholesterol.

## 7 Heart Healthy Foods For Longevity

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As stated in Reader's Digest, the high contents of monounsaturated fats can help restrain insulin resistance which aid in regulating blood sugar levels.

Among all the fruits, the low carb and sugar levels present in avocado helps to better maintain blood sugar. Apart from that, the high levels of potassium present in avocados help to keep blood pressure under control.

As avocados are a water-packed source of fat, they are easily digested and absorbed into the body compared to processed or animal-based fats. The consumption of avocados is most effective when they are ripe as it is where their nutrients have entirely developed and are best tolerated. Avocado acts as a great multi-purpose food to satisfy cravings and can even be used as a fat replacement when it comes to baking. It can also be used to substitute some of your favorite dairy dishes. Other than that, it can also be added to soups, dessert whips, as well as other recipes.

Research has shown that avocado consumption leads to multiple positive health effects which include better weight management and appetite booster. The publication of a Nutrition Journal based on a 7 year analysis in 2013 discovered that avocados are linked to a minimized risk of metabolic syndrome where a variety of symptoms are shown which may increase the likelihood of stroke, cardiovascular disease as well as diabetes. It also enables better absorption of other nutrients into the body.

Other than that, researchers have also revealed that avocados help to optimize cholesterol levels within as minimal as one week, and contain

## 7 Heart Healthy Foods For Longevity

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compounds that restrain and destroy oral cancer cells and enables protection against liver destruction. However, even though consumption of avocados provides many health benefits, the main risk of this fruit is overconsumption which may cause weight gain due to the fat content.

It may also resort to nutritional deficiencies as fat takes a longer time to digest, which keeps u feeling full for a longer period of time compared to other nutrients.



### **#3: Walnuts (and other Nuts and Seeds)**

Supplementing your longevity diet plan with essential boosting nutrients such as nuts and seeds is of paramount importance for good health. They are a wonderful source of dietary fiber required in order to stay healthy.

## 7 Heart Healthy Foods For Longevity

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In recent studies, researchers have found that the consumption of walnuts as a whole including the skin helps in imparting a multitude of nutritional benefits. You have the option to consume it either as a whole or as nut and seed butters at least 1-3 ounces each day.

Raw nuts are a great source of healthy fats which you would want to consume more the moment you remove non-vegetable carbs from your diet. They contain sufficient minerals and vitamins which makes a great snack when energy starts to flag. These heart healthy foods can also be added to different recipes to enhance flavor as well as adding extra nutrients. First of all, they contain mostly unsaturated fats which are heart healthy. They help to lower inflammation in every part of the body, specifically the blood and heart.

Walnuts contain omega-3 fatty acids which help to ensure the brain is functioning well, improves heart health as well as achieve optimum weight. A recent scientific study states that a shortage of omega-3 fatty acids which is provided by walnuts can result in hyperactivity, tantrums and irritability in kids. Adding walnuts to a child's diet helps to resolve the EFAs deficit and can brighten up their mood. It can even be applied to adults who are suffering from stress and depression. Some of the sources of omega-3 fats are seeds, flax and hemp seeds.

Other nuts such as almonds and cashews are good sources of iron and magnesium which deliver a healthy metabolism and ward off high insulin levels and fatigue. Aside from having high fat content, seeds and nuts can help in regulating metabolism and avoid unhealthy foods cravings.

## 7 Heart Healthy Foods For Longevity

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However, all nuts are not the same as some may deliver the highest amount in healthy fat or in terms of protein and carb.

Based on a 30-year study, it is found that people who consumed at least one ounce of nuts 7 times a week were 20 percent more likely to live longer in comparison to those who did not include nuts in their diet plan. Eating nuts for not less than 5 times per week will result in an overall reduction in mortality risk caused by heart disease, risk of having cancer as well as respiratory disease.



### **#4: Leafy Greens and Green Vegetables**

Green foods are heart-healthy foods and the key cornerstone of every healthy dietary living plan for optimal health.

## 7 Heart Healthy Foods For Longevity

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They're loaded with sufficient vitamins, protein, minerals and are known as the most alkaline-foods that can be found throughout the year. Leafy green vegetables such as broccoli, kale and spinach are few of the best to consume because they're rich in protein, calcium, magnesium, chlorophyll and irons.

Along with B6 vitamins, Vitamins A and C are also found in leafy green vegetables. Kale provides high vitamin K content for bone-building, which is necessary to stay active all year round. Leafy greens are also proven to be the best anti-cancer foods which play important roles in blocking the early phase of cancer and can even reverse the outcome of some major health problems. They are packed with an abundance of carotenoids-antioxidants and some other compounds which are created for protection against diseases. The antioxidants act as an agent in safeguarding the heart against cardiovascular disease and helps prevent some birth defects.

Moreover, the vitamin found in leafy green vegetables helps to reduce homocysteine levels which lower the risk of heart disease. One of the most attractive benefits of dark leafy greens is that they contain low levels of calorie, carbohydrate and glycemic index. These characteristics allow them to facilitate maintaining and achieving the optimum healthy body weight. Including more green vegetables in a balanced diet causes an increase in dietary fiber intake which helps to regulate the digestive system, achieve bowel health as well as weight management.

## 7 Heart Healthy Foods For Longevity

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Researchers have discovered that a gene known as T-bet respond particularly to leafy greens. These immune cells are vital for the production of immune cells present in your gut, responsible in handling inflammatory diseases and can even reduce the risk of bowel cancer. People who do not eat three or more servings of dark leafy greens per day are missing out on major health advantages.

Vegetables belong to a diverse food group with a wide variety to select from and plenty to match everyone's tastes and preferences. The easiest and most effective ways to increase vegetable intake is by juicing your vegetables with sprouted beans. This is because juicing makes it easily digestible and allows your body to absorb every nutrient present in the vegetables where some micronutrients may be lost during cooking. Based on a featured article, middle-aged people who eat a cup of cooked greens each day are able to live longer than those who didn't add leafy greens in their meals.



### **#5: Dark Chocolate (Cocoa & Cacao)**

Research has shown that the indulgent of dark chocolate leads to more than 40 distinct nutrition benefits which include longevity. Dark chocolate is an excellent source of antioxidants in the world which is made from the seed of the cocoa tree. It is most effective when cocoa or chocolate is eaten when it is raw (cacao) because when your cocoa is close to or in its natural raw state, they contain the highest nutritional value. In fact, Cacao is one of the most beneficial foods that help to facilitate a healthy heart and brain. Moreover, cacao aids in lowering blood sugar, blood pressure, and its healthy fats are actually beneficial for your body compared to animal-based saturated fats.

## 7 Heart Healthy Foods For Longevity

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In reference to a 2007 paper found in Journal of Nutrition, dark chocolate is loaded with a group of antioxidants called flavonoids which have been proven to avoid cardiovascular disease.

It also added that eating quality dark chocolate containing a high cocoa content is more beneficial, especially when there is 70 percent of cocoa or more. Both raw cacao and cocoa are wonderful heart-healthy foods which enhance hormones, circulation and even your digestion.

Basically, if you want to reward yourself with a sweet snack and maintain your health at the same time, dark chocolate may in fact be the best choice due to the various health benefits it offers. But, bear in mind that it is also rich in fat. Apart from keeping track of your fat intake, you may also opt for raw cacao powder or organic cocoa powder. Regular consumption of dark chocolate helps to break down bacteria and ferment its components into anti-inflammatory compounds which will benefit your overall health in the long run. Other than that, dark chocolate helps to prevent blood clots from forming and improve blood circulation.

Dark chocolate also acts as a mood booster as it contains some chemical compounds which exert a positive effect on your mind. It contains phenyl ethylamine (PEA), which allows your brain to release endorphins. So, consuming dark chocolate will help to brighten up your mood and makes you feel happier. A 1999 Harvard survey which consists of 8000 men has revealed that those who ate dark chocolate at least 3 times per month were able to live an extra year compared to those who didn't.



### **#6: Salmon**

There are several beneficial health reasons to indulge in salmon other than its delicious taste. Salmon is a nutritional powerhouse that is loaded with omega-3 fatty acids and vitamin D. Omega-3s have been proven to be able to lower the risk of inflammation and decrease triglyceride levels, both of which are linked to higher risk of heart disease. Evidence has shown that omega-3s helps to lower dementia risk as well as cognitive decline, keeping the brain healthy.

Not only that, feeding preschool children with salmon helps to prevent the risk of ADHD symptoms and can enhance their academic performance as the nutrition in salmon causes children to remember and focus better.

## 7 Heart Healthy Foods For Longevity

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Researchers mentioned that the omega3-fats in salmon may stimulate reduction in weight and significantly decrease belly fat in obese individuals. While most fatty fish are packed with omega-3s, salmon is a specifically nutritious dietary choice as it merely contains minimal mercury which is a potentially toxic contaminant.

With so much emphasis on the omega-3 advantages in salmon, other health benefits of salmon may have been overlooked. Another benefit of salmon is linked to the amino acid and protein present in salmon. A few researchers have discovered that there are little bioactive protein molecules called bioactive peptides found in salmon which can control inflammation in the digestive system, improve insulin efficiency and provide treatment for joint cartilage.

There is also a high level of potassium in salmon which is able to reduce blood pressure and prevent the fatty deposits from building up in the arteries. A recent study states that it is more beneficial to consume salmon with the bones as it is a great source of calcium which keep your bones healthy. Regular consumption of salmon leads to reduced risk of cognitive decline in the elderly, as well as depression and hostility in teenagers. Consuming salmon during pregnancy also helps to protect fetal brain while keeping it healthy.

The preparation of salmon is very versatile as it can be done in multiple unique ways in the kitchen. However, getting canned salmon is a quick and cheap alternative which offers the same nutrition benefits as fresh fish.

## 7 Heart Healthy Foods For Longevity

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In short, adding this fatty fish to your regular diet plan with at least two servings each week would enable you to meet your nutrient needs and lower the risk of developing certain diseases.



### **#7: Apple**

A group of research studies indicates that apples may be one of the world's healthiest fruits for you to include in your longevity diet plan. As they are the most commonly consumed fruit, people tend to overlook their impressive health benefits. In fact, in a featured article regarding the top 10 healthy foods in Medical News Today, apples were ranked first among the others. The old saying which we are all familiar with still stands true as an apple a day may be the ultimate food to promote longevity due to several health benefits it offers.

## 7 Heart Healthy Foods For Longevity

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Firstly, apples are rich in vitamin C, fiber, various antioxidants and folate to fight against Alzheimer's. Moreover, they contain polyphenols which function as oxidants and are mainly concentrated in the peel. So, to achieve the greatest benefits, it is best to eat the apple's skin. These polyphenols contain flavonoids known as quercetin which helps to lower blood pressure. Studies have shown that high flavonoids intake have led to a 20% reduction in risk of stroke. Researchers agreed that consuming apples that are rich in flavonoids could decrease the risk of getting pancreatic cancer by 23 percent.

By referring to Flores, it stated that regular apple consumption has been proven to provide cardiovascular benefits due to the fiber which they contain, as well as the high contents of polyphenols found in apples. Flores also mentioned that the antioxidant level in apples has the highest rank compared to other fruits which help to prevent the risk of developing cancer, specifically lung cancer. Another study analyzes the comparison between the impacts of consuming an apple a day and statins which are a group of drugs taken to lower cholesterol level. It is estimated that apples are almost as effective as statins in minimizing death.

In a nut shell, apples contain several nutrients in a way which sets them apart from other fruits and makes them an excellent food choice for achieving good health in order to promote longevity.

### **Conclusion**

Good dietary choices play an essential role in determining how different our lives will be throughout the years. While no single food is a cure-all, consuming a combination of various healthy foods are capable of fending off diseases and enhance your overall health. Incorporating those heart healthy foods discussed above in your dietary plan will definitely benefit you in the long run. You are just a decision away from an absolutely better life, longevity and greater health awaits you!

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