



Spotlight on: Heart Healthy Fruits & Vegetables

Phytochemicals & Antioxidants

The **phytochemicals** that give fruits and vegetables their red color, namely **lycopene** and **anthocyanins**, are **antioxidants** that can help lower your risk of some cancers, aid in memory function, aid in urinary tract health and may reduce the risk of heart disease.

Join us to feature red fruits and vegetables in your diet this month!

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Red pigmentation signifies heart healthy compounds.

Red Beets

Beets are a firm round root vegetable with leafy green tops that are also edible and highly nutritious. The most common color for beets is a garnet red. Beets are a unique source of phytonutrients called betalains. Betanin and vulgaxanthin are the two best-studied betalains from beets, and both have been shown to provide antioxidant, anti-inflammatory, and detoxification support. These nutrients fight plaque that can become "oxidized" or hardened on artery walls.

— from WHFOODS.org (World's Healthiest Foods)

Nutrient Powerhouse

Coupled with their status as a very good source of the antioxidant manganese and a good source of the antioxidant vitamin C, the unique phytonutrients in beets provide antioxidant support in a different way than other antioxidant-rich vegetables.

Recipe of the Day : Red Berry & Beet Smoothie



Adding a touch of honey to beets brings out their natural sweetness.

Serves: 1 serving

Ingredients:

- 2 cups mixed frozen red berries such as strawberries and raspberries
 - 1 small red beet, peeled and thinly sliced
 - 1 tablespoon fresh lemon juice
 - 1 tablespoon honey
- 2 teaspoons unrefined extra-virgin coconut oil

Directions:

Put the berries, 1/2 cup cold water, beet, lemon juice, honey and coconut oil into a blender. Blend on high until smooth, turning off the blender and pushing down on the ingredients with a spatula or wooden spoon as needed to help the blending process. Add 1 to 2 tablespoons more water if needed to adjust consistency.

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Stay tuned for more interesting nutrition information & fun, healthy recipes coming the rest of February from your Santa Rosa County School Food Service Office.