

Fresh produce provide the cornerstone for a heart-healthy diet because they help wipe out free radicals in the bloodstream, protecting blood vessels.



25 Top Heart-Healthy Foods

The foods listed here are all top-performers in protecting your heart and blood vessels. The list was created by the nutrition team at The Cleveland Clinic and adapted by The Family Wellness Center.

1. Wild Salmon

Nutrients: Omega-3 fatty acids.

Menu Idea: Broil salmon with lemon juice. Use left-over's in salad.

2. Flaxseed (ground) or Hempseed (whole)

Nutrients: Omega-3 fatty acids; fiber, phytoestrogens.

Menu Idea: Ground flaxseed hides easily in all sorts of foods – sprinkle on fruit bowls, add to smoothies, homemade muffins etc. Hempseed is also great in salads.

3. Oatmeal

Nutrients: Omega-3 fatty acids; magnesium; potassium; folate; niacin; calcium; soluble fiber.

Menu Idea: Make oatmeal Porridge with apples, raw nuts and seeds and fresh berries. Only use oatmeal containing no sugar.

4. Black or Kidney Beans

Nutrients: B-complex vitamins; niacin; folate; magnesium; omega-3 fatty acids; calcium; soluble fiber.

Menu Idea: Add to soup or salad, or make a bean dip for veggies.

5. Almonds

Nutrients: Plant omega-3 fatty acids; vitamin E; magnesium; fiber; heart-favorable mono- and polyunsaturated fats; phytosterols.

Menu Idea: Mix a few almonds into fruit bowl, oatmeal or homemade trail mix.

6. Walnuts

Nutrients: Plant omega-3 fatty acids; vitamin E; magnesium; folate; fiber; heart-favorable mono- and polyunsaturated fats; phytosterols.

Menu Idea: Walnuts are delicious in salads, pastas, muffins, and add flavor and crunch to whole grains like quinoa.

7. Grape Juice (or Red Wine)

Nutrients: Catechins and resveratrol (flavonoids).

Menu Idea: Drink organic grape juice made from organic purple concord grapes! Better yet eat the grapes.

8. Wild Tuna

Nutrients: Omega-3 fatty acids; folate; niacin.

Menu Idea: Here's lunch: Mix with hummus for a zesty tuna salad, add raisins and apples and grapes. Even more yummy; try broiling a filet.

9. Tofu

Nutrients: Niacin; folate; calcium; magnesium; potassium.

Menu Idea: Only use organic tofu that is non-GMO. Thinly slice "firm" tofu, marinate several hours, grill or stir-fry.

10. **Brown rice**

Nutrients: B-complex vitamins; fiber; niacin; magnesium, fiber.

Menu Idea: Try long-grain brown rice or brown basmati rice. Stir in a few chopped veggies (broccoli, carrots, spinach).

11. **Fermented Soy**

Nutrients: Isoflavones (a flavonoid); B-complex vitamins; niacin; folate, calcium; magnesium; potassium; phytoestrogens.

Menu Idea: **Products using only fermented soy include:**

- Natto
- Miso
- Tempeh
- Soy sauces (low sodium)
- Fermented tofu and fermented soymilk

Many studies have shown traditionally fermented soy--which is the form that is very popular in many Asian cultures--aids in preventing and reducing a variety of diseases including certain forms of heart disease and cancers. Only use organic and Non-GMO

12. **Blueberries**

Nutrients: Beta-carotene and lutein (carotenoids); anthocyanin (a flavonoid); ellagic acid (a polyphenol); vitamin C; folate; calcium, magnesium; potassium; fiber.

Menu Idea: Combine with strawberries, raspberries, cranberries – Use in fruit bowls, smoothies and salads.

13. **Carrots**

Nutrients: Alpha-carotene (a carotene); fiber.

Menu Idea: Baby carrots are sweet for lunch. Sneak shredded carrots into spaghetti sauce or try roasting with olive or coconut oil.

14. **Spinach**

Nutrients: Lutein (a carotene); B-complex vitamins; folate; magnesium; potassium; calcium; fiber.

Menu Idea: Pick organic spinach (not lettuce) for nutrient-packed salads; add to smoothies.

15. **Broccoli**

Nutrients: Beta-carotene (a carotenoid); Vitamins C and E; potassium; folate; calcium; fiber.

Menu Idea: Add fresh broccoli to store-bought soups to bring them to life... For a veggie dip, try hummus (chickpeas). Steam or sauté broccoli or trying roasting it.

16. **Sweet potato**

Nutrients: Beta-carotene (a carotenoid); vitamins A, C, E; fiber.

Menu Idea: Try slicing thin and stir frying in coconut oil for delicious home fries. Eat *au natural*, or with pineapple bits or add to smoothie or homemade juice drink.

17. **Red bell peppers**

Nutrients: Beta-carotene and lutein (carotenoids); B-complex vitamins; folate; potassium; fiber.

Menu Idea: Rub with olive oil, and grill or oven-roast or stir fry until tender. Delicious in wraps, salads, sandwiches, or dip into hummus.

18. **Asparagus**

Nutrients: Beta-carotene and lutein (carotenoids); B-complex vitamins; folate; fiber.

Menu Idea: Grill or steam slightly, then dress with olive oil and lemon...

19. Oranges

Nutrients: Beta-cryptoxanthin, beta- and alpha-carotene, lutein (carotenoids) and flavones (flavonoids); vitamin C; potassium; folate; fiber.

Menu Idea: Try one orange and one apple in your blender and dilute with water for instant orange juice with the fiber. Try mixing cooked lentils with orange slices, cilantro and a bit of olive oil; serve as a chilled salad.

20. Tomatoes

Nutrients: Beta- and alpha-carotene, lycopene, lutein (carotenoids); vitamin C; potassium; folate; fiber.

Menu Idea: Who doesn't love tomatoes in sandwiches, salads, pastas, or just as a side dish?

21. Acorn squash

Nutrients: Beta-carotene and lutein (carotenoids); B-complex and C vitamins; folate; calcium; magnesium; potassium; fiber.

Menu Idea: Baked squash is comfort food on a chilly day. Serve with sautéed spinach, pine nuts, raisins or try with walnuts raisins and cinnamon.

22. Cantaloupe

Nutrients: Alpha- and beta-carotene and lutein (carotenoids); B-complex and C vitamins; folate; potassium; fiber.

Menu Idea: A fragrant ripe cantaloupe is perfect for breakfast, lunch, potluck dinners. Simply cut and enjoy! Delicious in smoothies too!

23. Papaya

Nutrients: Beta-carotene, beta-cryptoxanthin, lutein (carotenoids); Vitamins C and E; folate; calcium; magnesium; potassium.

Menu Idea: Serve papaya salsa with salmon: Mix papaya, pineapple, scallions, garlic, fresh lime juice, a touch of sea salt and black pepper. Papaya is great in fruit salads and smoothies too.

24. Dark chocolate

Nutrients: Resveratrol and cocoa phenols (flavonoids).

Menu Idea: Raw chocolate with 80% cocoa is best and no or very low sugar. Start with 70% or higher cocoa content. Try our Green's First Dutch Chocolate Boost which is sweetened with Stevia.

25. Tea

Nutrients: Catechins and flavonols (flavonoids).

Menu Idea: Try white, green or oolong tea. Remember no sugar or sugar substitute. Make sun tea: Combine a clear glass jar, several tea bags, and hours of sunshine.



Try our Green's First Greens or Berry for great anti-oxidant protection with over 15 servings of Vegetables and 54 super foods!

A Brief Guide to Nutrients in Heart-Healthy Foods and Supplements

Phytoestrogens are substances in plants (like flaxseed) that have a weak estrogen-like action in the body. Studies suggest that flaxseed lowers the risk of blood clots, stroke, and cardiac arrhythmias. It may also help lower total and LDL "bad" cholesterol and triglycerides, and even blood pressure.

Phytosterols are plant sterols that chemically resemble cholesterol -- and seem to reduce blood cholesterol. All nuts and seeds, including wheat germ, have phytosterols.

Carotenoids are heart-protective antioxidants in many colorful fruits and veggies. Alpha-carotene, beta-carotene, lutein, and lycopene are carotenoids.

Polyphenols are another set of antioxidants that protect blood vessels, lower blood pressure, reduce LDL "bad" cholesterol. **Flavonoid** polyphenols include catechins, flavonones, flavonols, isoflavones, resveratrol, and anthocyanins. **Non-flavonoid** polyphenols include ellagic acid (found in all types of berries).

Omega-3 fatty acids (found in fatty fish like salmon) and **alpha-linolenic fatty acids** (found in plant foods like walnuts) help boost the immune system, reduce blood clots, and protect against heart attacks. They also increase good HDL levels, lower triglyceride levels, protect arteries from plaque buildup, are anti-inflammatories, and lower blood pressure. *We love all of Standard Process's Fish Oil line. Plus try our MCT Colada by Design for Health.*

B-complex vitamins -- like **Vitamin B-12 (folate)** and **vitamin B-6** -- protect against blood clots and atherosclerosis, or hardening of the arteries. **Niacin (vitamin B-3)** helps increase HDL "good" cholesterol. *We love Cataplex B with 25 co-factors of B by Standard Process.*

Vitamins C and E are antioxidants that protect cells from free radical damage. **Magnesium, potassium, and calcium** help lower blood pressure. **Fiber**-rich foods help lower cholesterol levels. A Tufts University study found individuals taking 700 mg daily of vitamin C had a 62% reduced risk from dying from Heart disease and a 50% reduced mortality rate over all. Combining the amino acid lysine with Vitamin C may dissolve blot clots in the blood stream. *Try Standard Process Cataplex C.*

Blond Psyllium found in seed husks may lower LDL "bad" cholesterol.

coQ10 found in rice and wheat bran was found to be extremely beneficial treating congestive heart failure. In one study all patients improved after 30 days and 53% were symptom free.

Potassium supplements have been shown to help patients reduce reliance on blood pressure medication and diuretics. Try drinking coconut water which has more potassium than bananas!

Beta Carotene (Vitamin A precursor) A Harvard study found that patients with a previous history of heart disease were 40% less likely to have a heart attack than those given a placebo. A John's Hopkins University study found people with high levels of beta carotene had 50% fewer heart disease cases.

Magnesium deficiency has been found in those who die suddenly of heart attacks. Magnesium deficiency has also been implicated in mitral valve prolapse. *We love Standard Process Magnesium Lactate.*

Amino Acids such as L-arginine and L-carnitine when given intravenously and then followed by therapeutic doses has been shown to help damaged heart muscles, reduce the number of cardiac events by 50% and reduce arrhythmia and angina pectoris significantly.