

# Articles



## The Secrets of Eating Right and Living Longer 12 Super Foods to Add to Your Diet

-- By Antigone Arthur

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Yes, it's possible to eat certain foods and boost your longevity. Often labeled "super foods," these foods have the ability to not only strengthen the immune system, but to also fight disease, and lower body fat and cholesterol.

All of these health benefits can help you live a longer, healthier, and happier life.

Some super foods contain substances called antioxidants and phytochemicals, which work together to fight disease and promote a long life.

A majority of these foods work best when they're combined with a well-balanced diet.

### Common Super Foods For Boosting Longevity

Certain types of **fish**, particularly fatty cuts of fish, contain healthy fats that help lower cholesterol and prevent heart attacks. These foods may also reduce depression. Salmon, trout, and mackerel are among the top choices. These fish contain valuable omega-3 fatty acids.

*\*\*If you are pregnant, nursing, or trying to conceive, read "[Casting Your Net on Seafood Safety](#)" for proper guidelines to eating fish.*

**Tomatoes** are valuable because they contain lycopene, which helps fight free radicals. Free radicals can damage the skin and vital organs. Lycopene also helps stimulate the immune system; some studies show it might prevent the progression of certain degenerative diseases, and protect against prostate cancer.

When it comes to **broccoli**, your mother had it right. Broccoli could be considered the number one super food; many experts agree that if you can eat just one vegetable, these green guys are your best bet. Broccoli contains large amounts of vitamin C, calcium, and fiber, and can help prevent bone loss, fight disease, reduce your risk of heart disease, and even boost your immune system.

**Garlic** is a wonderful supplement that acts as a powerful anti-viral which can reduce your chances for catching colds and common infections. Garlic also has many natural anti-oxidant properties. Fresh garlic contains the most nutrients, although it's also available in capsule form. Spice up your favorite dish with

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some dried garlic for an extra boost.

**Oats**, like many other types of grain, are high in soluble and insoluble fiber, which help protect the body from colon cancer. This high-fiber cereal keeps you fuller longer, aiding in your weight loss efforts. Oats also help build strong bones.

**Green tea** helps stimulate your metabolism (a bonus for anyone trying to lose weight) but also helps prevent the oxidation of cells in the body. Green tea is also thought to be an immune system booster. It's rich in antioxidants and certain vitamins, including A, C and E. Replace your after-dinner coffee with this brew, and your body will thank you.

**Yogurt** contains "friendly" bacteria, which help maintain the intestines and keep the bowels regulated. It can also suppress yeast overgrowth in both men and women. High in calcium, yogurt is also believed to act as a natural appetite suppressant. Soy yogurts contain these same live cultures, so don't let a dairy-free diet stop you from getting these essential nutrients.

**Nuts** scare most people away because of their high fat content, but they're actually very good for you. They contain healthy fats, part of a well balanced diet. Some nuts, particularly brazil nuts, contain selenium, which helps prevent certain types of cancer.

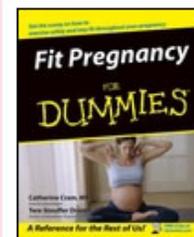
**Beans** (kidney beans, black beans, navy beans, and more) are rich in folate, an important nutrient— particularly for women. Eating an adequate amount of folate helps prevent birth defects in newborns. Beans are also a cholesterol-free protein source, and high in fiber.

Popeye has it right when it comes to **spinach**. This super food is rich in vitamins A and C, folic acid and magnesium. All of these work together to help reduce the likelihood of cancer and even help decrease the risk for heart disease.

Most **mushrooms** contain a substance that stimulates the immune system. Mushrooms are often used in natural therapy to help fight off illness. Some mushrooms (shitake, enoki and reishi varieties) also have anti-cancer effects.

**Bananas** are a great super food for athletes. They're rich in two essential nutrients (potassium and magnesium) that aid in proper hydration, and they help reduce the likelihood of muscle cramps. They also provide a good source of soluble fiber.

→ [The Secrets of Eating Right and Living Longer](#)



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Antigone is a freelance writer and proud mother of daughter Hannah. She is expecting baby #2 in early 2005. Antigone has several years experience writing and researching health related articles on numerous subjects including pregnancy, breastfeeding and infertility. She regularly consults with clients on health related literature and has a background covering alternative health solutions. Antigone started her consulting business so she could work from home and raise her children. You can learn more about her consulting services at <http://www.snappywriting.com>

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