

Foods that Fight Cancer

According to the American Institute for Cancer Research, “evidence is mounting that the minerals, vitamins, and phytochemicals in plant foods interact to provide extra cancer protection.” In other words, including a variety of plant foods can help keep you healthy for many years to come!

But what foods offer the most protection against cancer?

In general, laboratory research points to fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and beans as being the most beneficial for health. In case you’re looking for more specifics, here’s a list of some of the top cancer-fighting foods and how they can help:

- ❖ **Beans & legumes** (including black, red, kidney, and pinto beans; black-eyed and green peas; and lentils): Certain compounds found in beans have been shown to prevent cancer cells from replicating and possibly even slow the growth of tumors.
- ❖ **Berries** (including strawberries, raspberries, blueberries, blackberries): Berries are rich in antioxidants and can also help the body deactivate chemicals that can cause cancer.
- ❖ **Cruciferous vegetables** (including broccoli, cauliflower, cabbage, Brussels sprouts, and kale): Components of these veggies have been shown to stop the growth of cancer cells in test tubes and animals.
- ❖ **Dark green leafy vegetables** (including spinach, kale, romaine, collard greens, and Swiss chard): These veggies are rich in carotenoids – a group of powerful antioxidants.
- ❖ **Flaxseed**: Flaxseeds are very rich in an omega-3 fatty acid called alpha-linolenic acid (ALA), which offers protection against cancer and heart disease. Remember: whole flaxseeds cannot be digested, so be sure to get the ground flaxseeds to get the full benefit of this food.
- ❖ **Garlic and Allium vegetables** (including onions, scallions, leeks, and chives): Allium veggies contain many compounds that have stopped or slowed the growth of cancer cells in the laboratory or in animals.
- ❖ **Grapes and grape juice**: Both are rich sources of a compound called resveratrol, which has antioxidant and anti-inflammatory properties.
- ❖ **Green tea**: Green tea is rich in a class of potent antioxidants called catechins. In the lab, these compounds have been able to slow or even prevent cancer development.
- ❖ **Soy**: Soy has been associated with inhibition of the growth of prostate and breast cancer cells. Consumption early in life seems to be especially powerful.
- ❖ **Tomatoes**: Tomatoes contain a powerful, anti-cancer phytochemical called lycopene. The cancer-fighting properties of lycopene appear to be stronger if it comes from cooked tomatoes and tomatoes products (like tomato sauce).
- ❖ **Whole Grains** (including whole wheat bread, pasta, or cereal; oatmeal; wild brown rice; barley; rye; bulgur; quinoa): Whole grains contain hundreds of phytochemicals which protect cells from the damage that may lead to cancer.

As you can see, there are a variety of foods that can help *you* fight cancer. Why not try some of these delicious foods and improve your health at the same time?