



## Top 25 Foods to Add to Your Diet

1. **Almonds** – A good source of potassium, almonds, like other nuts, are low in saturated fat and high in unsaturated fat (the good fat) – just watch how many you eat, because nuts are also high in calories.
2. **Apples** – A good source of fibre and a nutritious and low calorie snack - a medium-sized apple is only 80 calories. When choosing your apples, pick red ones, because they contain quercetin, an antioxidant.
3. **Apricots** – A good source of vitamins A and C, apricots are also a good way to boost your lycopene levels, which have been associated with cancer prevention in men.
4. **Asparagus**- For only 25 calories in eight medium-sized spears, you get 25 percent of your daily vitamin A and 15 percent of your vitamin C, plus folic acid (important for those who are trying to get pregnant and for individuals at risk for, or who already suffer from heart disease).
5. **Bananas** – A good source of magnesium (which protects against bone loss) and potassium. A medium banana has 422 milligrams of potassium, which is almost 10 percent of the recommended daily dose of 4,700 milligrams of potassium. Potassium is recommended for those with high blood pressure and for individuals at risk for kidney stones and bone loss.
6. **Barley** – Try cooking up some barley in place of white rice. Barley is a good source of iron and minerals, and is a complex carbohydrate. When purchasing barley, make sure that you are buying the whole-grain barley, and not the “pearl” variety with the healthy outer husk removed.
7. **Beets** – These little guys are chalked full of folate and antioxidants. Try grating some raw beets in your salad, but beware, because heating them decreases their antioxidant power.
8. **Blackstrap molasses** - Blackstrap molasses is a sweetener that is actually good for you. Unlike refined white sugar and corn syrup (which are stripped of virtually all nutrients except simple carbohydrates), or artificial sweeteners like saccharine or aspartame (which not only provide no useful nutrients, but also have been shown to cause health problems in sensitive individuals), blackstrap molasses is a healthful sweetener that contains significant amounts of a variety of minerals that promote your health.
9. **Blueberries** – Currently being studied for their antioxidant benefits, including: their potential ability to boost brain functions that weaken with age, their ability to lower cholesterol levels and their role in the prevention of osteoporosis and hardening of the arteries. Since it's not blueberry season around here yet, try frozen, unsweetened blueberries and make yourself a fruit smoothie.

- 10. Broccoli** – Broccoli is one of the most healthful foods you can eat--a real nutritional powerhouse. Along with a rich supply of vitamins and minerals--notably vitamin C, folate (folic acid), and potassium--it contains the phytochemical sulforaphane, which helps reduce the risk of cancer. In addition, broccoli contains a good amount of beta-carotene. And, unless you drown it in cheese sauce, broccoli is (like all green vegetables) low in calories and virtually fat-free.
- 11. Brown rice** – Whole grains, like brown rice, include the bran and germ of the natural grain that are lost in the processing that makes white rice. During this processing, a lot of good stuff gets lost, such as fibre, phosphorus and potassium.
- 12. Cantaloupe** – That orange color inside should give you a clue that cantaloupe is a great source of beta-carotene. In fact, one cup of cut up cantaloupe contains 100 percent of your daily value of beta-carotene and vitamin C, and it also has more potassium (492 milligrams) than a small banana.
- 13. Cinnamon** – This spice has been shown to control blood sugar levels (making it a staple spice for diabetics) and cholesterol. Try sprinkling some in your coffee or on top of your oatmeal.
- 14. Crisp breads** - Whole-grain rye crackers, like Wasa, Ry Krisp, and Ryvita — usually called crispbreads — are loaded with fiber and make for a great substitute to bread.
- 15. Fish oil** – This is the best known supplement for omega-3. Omega-3 has been shown to help those with high cholesterol levels, aid people suffering from depression, and it has proven its ability to improve the texture of the skin, improve memory and prevent certain types of heart disease. Try oil, as opposed to capsules. The oil is more powerful and will absorb better into your system. You can purchase fish oil that is lightly flavoured with lemon. This will help make it go down the ol' hatch a little easier – trust me.
- 16. Kidney beans** – Rich in fibre, iron and protein, beans of all sorts can be a key ingredient in a meatless meal. Most beans - black, navy, pinto and kidney, have about the same nutritional value, with kidney beans being marginally a better choice due to their slightly higher protein and fibre count and the fact they contain fewer calories. If you purchase raw beans, be sure to pre-soak them to help break down the carbohydrates that cause gas in some people, or purchase canned organic, no-salt added beans.
- 17. Oatmeal** – You can lower your blood cholesterol with oat bran and with cold cereal made from oatmeal or oat bran. Hot oatmeal is also filled with fibre and a good breakfast choice to keep you energized and full. Words of caution though - do not buy the pre-packaged oatmeal with all the fancy-flavours. These are filled with sugar, salt and preservatives. Stick to plain old oatmeal and if you have to jazz it up, try mixing in a ¼ cup of unsweetened apple sauce and a teaspoon of cinnamon. Or try my personal favourite, adding in a packet of Splenda and sliced peaches, strawberries or blueberries.
- 18. Peanut butter** – Most of the fat in peanut butter remains monounsaturated, making this spread a better alternative to those high-fat, high-sodium deli meats.
- 19. Pumpkin** – Eat this superstar food either from the can or eat the seeds either roasted or tossed on top of a salad. This vegetable is high in fibre, but low in calories and fat.
- 20. Quinoa** - Pronounced *keen-wa*, this grain is thought to contain more protein than any other grain. It is also a good source of dietary fiber and is high in magnesium, potassium

and iron and a good source of phosphorous, calcium, vitamin E and several B vitamins. Quinoa is also gluten-free and easy to digest, and it contains an almost perfect balance of all eight essential amino acids needed for tissue development.

- 21. Sweet potatoes** – Try sweet potatoes instead of white ones. They have more beta-carotene, vitamin C, folate, calcium and manganese than white spuds. Try this easy and quick side dish that even I can make: cut up a large sweet potatoe in small pieces and then toss lightly in olive oil and fresh cut rosemary. Place on a baking sheet and bake at 375 degrees for 40-45 minutes.
- 22. Spinach** - Packed with large amounts of the antioxidant beta-carotene, as well as the even more powerful carotenoids lutein and zeaxanthin, spinach has a strong and proven history of anti-cancer benefits. Spinach is also an excellent source of folate - 1oz contains nearly 25% of our daily requirement. It also protects against age-related macular degeneration (AMD), an eye disease affecting elderly people. Spinach is best eaten raw or lightly cooked after having been washed and shaken dry without adding any water.
- 23. Tomatoes** - Tomatoes contain lycopene, probably the most powerful antioxidant among the carotenoids, known for reducing the risk of prostate cancer and other cancers of the digestive tract. Lycopene is so good at mopping up free radicals that it outperforms the best-known carotenoid of them all, beta-carotene. It is readily released from tomatoes by cooking and—good news for pizza lovers like me—it is most easily absorbed when a small amount of oil is added. Like your tomatoes raw? That's good too. They can be a valuable source of vitamin C.
- 24. Turmeric** – This spice, native from India, is loaded with anti- inflammatory and anti-cancer properties. Try sprinkling some on eggs or in any vegetable dish.
- 25. Water** – Without water, we wouldn't even last a few days. Depending on a person's body fat content, the body will contain from about 45% water in very obese individuals to 70% in very lean individuals (as muscles store more water). Water is found in all parts of the body and is essential for a majority of our body's functions, such as metabolism and digestion. It helps lubricate the joints, regulates the body temperature and helps fight fatigue and maintain mental alertness. Aim for 8 to 12 glasses a day.

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