



Creating Community
Changing Lives

February 2016 Newsletter



5 Red Foods for Health



1. Cherries

Rich in antioxidants, such as anthocyanin (believed to reduce pain and inflammation), cherries have been purported to fight myriad diseases, including diabetes, cancer, arthritis and gout. Cherries are also a good source of fiber, potassium and vitamin A.



2. Pomegranate

A near-icon of fertility in much of its native range (Iran to the Himalayas), the pomegranate also has come to represent good health. Studies have shown that the fruit may help to reduce the buildup of plaque in arteries and lower blood pressure. Other research hints that pomegranate juice may help manage prostate cancer, diabetes, arthritis and erectile dysfunction. Experts believe that pomegranate's benefits come from its powerful punch of polyphenols—including anthocyanins (found in blue, purple and deep-red foods) & tannins (also found in wine and tea).



3. Beets

With an earthy flavor that gets super sweet when cooked, beets are very nutritious: 1/2 cup of cooked beets has just 29 calories but boasts 2 grams of fiber and provides 19 percent of the daily value for folate, a B vitamin needed for the growth of healthy new cells. Plus their beautiful color comes from betanin, a phytochemical that's thought to bolster immunity. Roast them, pickle them or shred them raw and dress them with citrus for a refreshing salad in these 4 quick and easy beet recipes.



4. Chile Peppers

Capsaicin, an antioxidant in chiles, thwarts food spoilage and may protect blood vessels. It also makes peppers hot—in more ways than one (hence the spicy folklore that piquant peppers rev up sexual desires). Studies show that capsaicin increases the body's metabolic rate and may stimulate brain chemicals that help us feel less hungry. In a 2005 study in the *International Journal of Obesity*, people ate 16 percent fewer calories at a meal if they sipped tomato juice spiked with hot-pepper extract (versus plain tomato juice) a half hour earlier.



5. Tomatoes

A terrific source of vitamin C with a touch of vitamin A, potassium and fiber thrown in for good measure, tomatoes don't just taste great, they're also good for you. (Hard to believe that at one time they were thought to be poisonous!) Tomatoes are also rich in lycopene, an antioxidant that fights skin aging and may be beneficial against cancer and heart disease.

Source: http://www.eatingwell.com/nutrition_health/nutrition_news_information/5_red_foods_for_health

Tomato & Red Pepper Soup



A dash of extra virgin olive oil and fresh basil makes this simple tomato and red pepper soup recipe oh-so special. Best of all, it takes just 10 minutes to prepare. An easy - and tasty way to beat the chill.

INGREDIENTS

- * 2 tbsp. olive oil
- * 1 onion, chopped
- * 2 lg. red peppers, seeds removed, roughly chopped
- * 2 cloves garlic, chopped
- * 600g (21oz) ripe tomatoes, quartered
- * 400g (14oz) tin chopped tomatoes
- * 1L chicken stock or vegetable stock
- * 1 tbsp. chopped fresh basil, to garnish
- * Extra virgin olive oil, to garnish

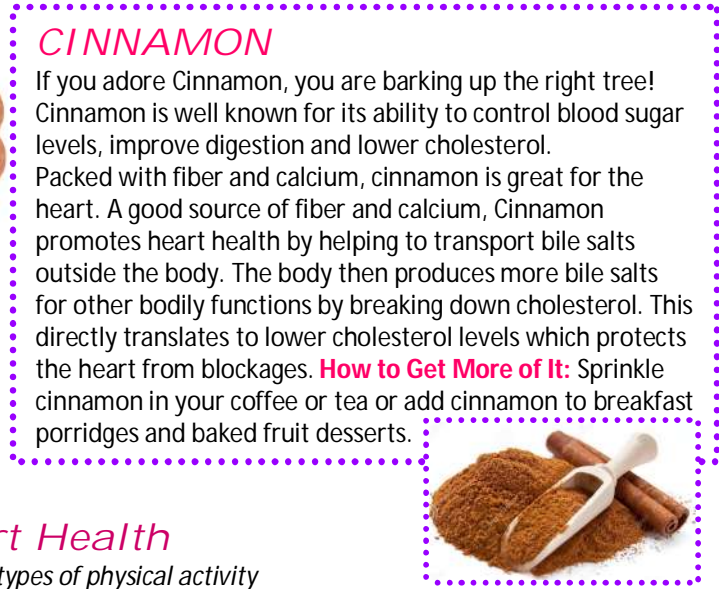
METHOD

- Heat the olive oil in a large saucepan. Sauté the onion, peppers, and garlic for about 5 minutes. Add the fresh tomatoes and cook for another 3-4 minutes.
- Add the tinned tomatoes, the stock and 1 (250ml) cup of water. Bring to the boil, reduce the heat and simmer for 30 minutes.
- Remove from the heat and allow to cool a little.
- Purée the soup in batches in a food processor or with a hand-held blender. Strain through a coarse sieve and add a little extra stock, if desired.
- Season to taste with salt and freshly ground black pepper. Serve hot, and garnished with the basil and a drizzle of extra virgin olive oil.

top tips

- Roasting the vegetables gives the soup a delicious flavour. Simply halve the onions, tomatoes and peppers, place them on a lined baking tray. Drizzle with a little olive oil and roast in a 200°C (gas mark 6) oven for 60 minutes, turning the onions and peppers once. Next, peel the skin from the cooked peppers and tomatoes. Add the vegetables to the stock and continue from step 2.

Source: <http://www.houseandgarden.co.uk/recipes/main-courses/tomato-red-pepper-soup>



The 6 Best Exercises for Heart Health

Improve your cardiovascular fitness with these heart-pumping types of physical activity

- 1. Circuit training** - Any movement is better than sitting still when it comes to improving your heart health, but one of the best types of exercises to increase your cardiovascular fitness is circuit training, says Brendan J. Fox, a Toronto-based health and fitness expert. "When you work out at a very high intensity the blood starts to pump a lot harder and that challenges the elasticity of the arterial wall," explains Fox. "It sort of stretches the arteries and improves the elasticity for better cardiovascular fitness." Opting for minimal rest periods, and alternating between upper and lower body exercises is the ideal way to get maximum results.
- 2. Lane swimming** - Hit the pool for a workout your heart (and lungs!) will love. "Leisure swimming only brings benefits for the extremely unfit population," says Fox. "Lane swimming will give you a greater return on your exercise time investment." His recommendation? Progressing from eight to 12 lengths of the pool per swim technique, varying techniques on different days. One swim technique guaranteed to bring up your fitness level is fist freestyle, which is using closed fists for any swim style, explains Fox. "You have to work harder because you don't have any swim paddle effect with the open hand."
- 3. Weight training** - "Weight training is critical for people with heart disease," says Dr. Paul Oh, medical director of the Cardiac Rehabilitation and Secondary Prevention Program at the Toronto Rehabilitation Institute. In addition to building muscle mass, which will help you burn fat, weight training is also good for bone health and your heart. When it comes to deciding what type of weight training to do, using your own body weight can be extremely effective.
- 4. Running** - A steady run is obviously an excellent way to stay in shape, but running intervals will really push your cardiovascular fitness to the next level. Whether it's sprints or hills, all you need is 10 seconds at a time. "I recommend keeping the intensity at 10 seconds to ensure you go all out," says Fox, who suggests starting with four 10-second intervals per workout, eventually working your way up to 10. He also recommends doing the intervals first, so not only do you have the energy to do them, but this type of training will deplete some of the glycogen or carbohydrate stored in the muscle, allowing you to tap into stored fat more readily. Bonus!
Tip: Work hard enough to get out of breath and then take whatever minimal rest period you need to recover, says Fox.
- 5. Yoga** - You don't have to be doing a high level of activity to increase your heart health, admits Dr. Oh, who says that pushing your heart rate up and down quickly can be hazardous to those who are out of shape (heart attacks that occur while shovelling snow is an example of this). At first glance, yoga may not seem like an obvious heart health activity, but it is. "Yoga is great for strength and muscle toning," says Dr. Oh. Plus more active styles of yoga such as Ashtanga and Bikram can offer cardiovascular benefits, as your heart rate is elevated throughout the class.
- 6. Cycling** - Regular cycling can substantially reduce your risk for coronary heart disease, according to a large study done by the British Medical Association. The findings revealed that cycling 32 kilometres a week reduced the potential to develop heart disease by a whopping 50 percent. Cycling uses large muscle groups in the legs to elevate your heart rate, which helps to improve not only your cardiovascular fitness but also burns calories, and has even been shown to improve mental health.

Tip: No matter what exercise you choose to do, 30 minutes, 5 days a week is an ideal place to start, says Dr. Oh, who recommends building up to 1 hour, 5 days a week.

Edited from: <http://www.besthealthmag.ca/best-you/heart-health/the-6-best-exercises-for-heart-health>