

What Is a Superfood?

Superfood is a term used to describe food with a high nutrient content that may offer health benefits. While all foods provide calories and some nutrition, scientists in recent years have identified some superfoods that can do much more. These foods not only nourish you, but work with your body to improve your health and prevent common diseases, including conditions commonly associated with aging. These superfoods harness the power of phytochemicals in fruits, vegetables, whole grains, beans and nuts.

Research is showing that once ingested, these phytochemicals affect chemical processes in the human body and seem to be involved in protecting our bodies from disease. Here are a few findings from the research on phytochemicals:

- **Stimulate the immune system, the body's defense against viruses, bacteria and other disease-causing agents.**
- **Block the potential for carcinogens (cancer-causing substances) to be formed in the body from substances we eat, drink and absorb from the environment.**
- **Reduce inflammation that provides a setting favorable for cancer growth.**
- **Prevent DNA damage and help with DNA repair mechanisms.**
- **Reduce oxidation, the damage to cells that occurs with aging and exposure to pollution.**
- **Slow the growth rate of cancer cells.**
- **Trigger death of damaged cells that may be precursors to cancer.**
- **Help to regulate hormones, such as estrogen and insulin. Excess levels of these hormones are linked with increased risk for breast and colon cancers.**

Many vegetables and fruits are especially rich in phytochemicals. They are often brightly colored – like broccoli, carrots, tomatoes and blueberries – or strongly flavored like garlic and onions. A diet that emphasizes vegetables, fruit, whole grains and beans appears to be the healthiest eating pattern for lowering risk of cancer, heart disease, stroke, diabetes and other serious diseases.

Source: American Institute for Cancer Research

Buddha's Feast Makes: 4-6 Servings

The brightly colored vegetables in this Chinese stir-fry tell you it's rich in health-protective phytochemicals.

Ingredients:

- 1/4 cup chicken or vegetable broth
- 2 tablespoons low-sodium teriyaki sauce
- 1 tablespoon cornstarch
- 3 cups sliced bok choy or Chinese cabbage
- 1 cup broccoli florets
- 2 carrots, thinly sliced on the diagonal
- 1 cup small button mushrooms, stemmed and rinsed
- 1/4 cup canned water chestnuts, sliced
- 1 14-ounce can baby corn, drained
- 1-2 garlic cloves, minced

Preparation:

1. In a bowl, whisk together the broth, soy sauce and cornstarch. Set aside.
2. Bring a pot of water to a boil. Cook the bok choy and broccoli for 1 minute. Drain and set aside.
3. Coat a skillet with cooking spray. Heat pan over medium heat; add the carrots and mushrooms. Sauté for 3 minutes, stirring often.
4. Add the bok choy, broccoli, water chestnuts, baby corn and garlic. Cook for 2 minutes to heat through. Add reserved sauce and cook, stirring, until it thickens, about 2 minutes.



NUTRITIONAL INFO PER SERVING

111 Calories
0.8g Fat
0g Saturated fat
5.0g Protein
25g Carbohydrate
5.9g Fiber
408mg Sodium