Corporate Fitness Works

Top 10 Nutrient Dense Foods

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Why do we care about nutrient dense foods?

- Nutrient density is the amount of nutrients you get for the calories consumed.
- These foods have a higher nutritious value by being rich in vitamins, minerals, and protein and straying away from too much saturated fat, added sugars, and sodium.
- General foods in the nutrient dense categories:
  - fruits
  - vegetables
  - whole grains
  - non-fat and low-fat dairy
  - fish and seafood
  - unprocessed lean meats and skinless poultry
  - nuts and legumes

Number 1 | Salmon

- Salmon is rich in omega-3 fatty acids, magnesium, potassium, selenium, and B vitamins

- Packs a high quality for animal protein. Studies show eating more fatty fish can lower the risk of heart disease, dementia, depression, and many other common health conditions

- Try adding salmon or other fatty fish to your diet to get all the omega-3s your body needs

Omega 3's are very important for optimal functioning of your body. They are linked to improving your well-being and lowering risk of many serious diseases.

- Kale is one the most nutrient dense vegetables you can eat!
- High in vitamin A, B6, C, and K1
- Also contains potassium, calcium, magnesium, copper, and manganese
- Kale beats spinach by having a lower oxalate content

Oxalates are substances that prevent minerals from being absorbed in the intestine.

- Seaweed is even more nutritious than land vegetables
- High in minerals such as calcium, iron, magnesium, manganese, and iodine
- Seaweed also has antioxidants with powerful anti-inflammatory capabilities
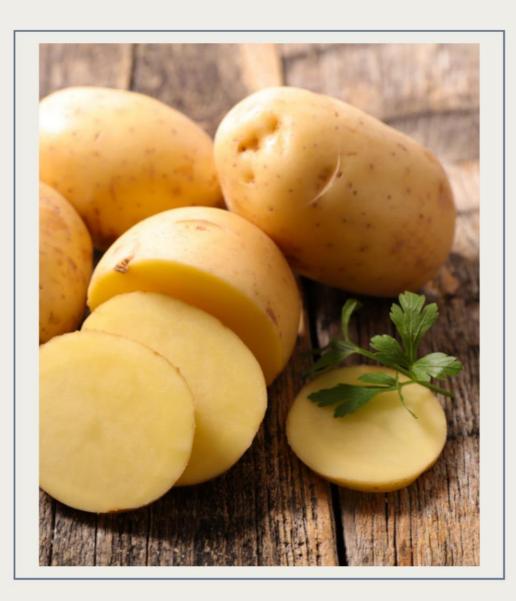- Alternative Supplement: dried kelp tablets

- Raw garlic has antibacterial and antifungal properties
- High in vitamins B1, B6, and C, calcium, potassium, copper, manganese, and selenium
- High in beneficial sulfur compounds such as allicin

- Commonly consumed shellfish are clams, oysters, scallops, and mussels
- Clams: vitamin B12, C, other various B vitamins, potassium, selenium, and iron
- Oysters: high zinc content, copper, vitamin B12, and vitamin D
- Shellfish are some of the most nutritious sea animals.
- Most known for zinc and vitamin B12

- High in potassium, magnesium, iron, copper, manganese, vitamin C, and most B vitamins
- Potatoes contain a little bit of almost every nutrient Can produce a resistant starch after cooling - a powerful health benefit
- The red and sweet potato contain optimal nutrition. Other potato types include:
  - white potato
  - russet potato
  - sweet potato

- Sardines are small oily fish that can be eaten whole
- Heart Healthy - contain very high values of omega-3 fatty acids
- Contain a little bit of almost everything your body needs
- Alternatives: anchovies, herring, mackerel, black cod, and salmon

Number 9 | Blueberries

- Not as high in calorie for calorie count, BUT has very high antioxidant values and vitamin C
- Powerful compounds that can help protect the brain
- Obtain their color from one of the powerful compounds, anthocyanin
- Studies found this fruit has improved memory, blood pressure, and LDL cholesterol levels

Number 9 | Egg Yolks

- Whole eggs are sometimes referred to "nature's multivitamin"
- Yolks are loaded with high quality protein, healthy fats, vitamins, and minerals, including choline
- High in lutein and zeaxanthin values which protect your eyes and reduce the risk of eye diseases

- Dark chocolate with a high content of 70% cocoa is one of the most nutritious foods you can eat!
- Big range of antioxidants and loaded with fiber, iron, magnesium, copper, and manganese
- Multiple studies suggest dark chocolate can improve blood flow, brain function, lower blood pressure, and reduce oxidized LDL cholesterol
- Swap out milk chocolate for dark chocolate

Final Thoughts

- A balanced approach is important. Try eating a heart healthy dietary pattern:
    - Variety of fruits and vegetables
    - Choose whole grains
    - Select healthy sources of protein, legumes and nuts, fish or seafood, low-fat or non-fat dairy, and lean cuts of meat
- Limiting red and processed meats, sodium, added sugars, and alcohol
- Example: Which bread would you decide to pick? 80 calories per slice with few vitamins and minerals, or one with the same number of calories, but more protein, 3x more magnesium, 2x fiber, potassium and few other minerals.
- Check out "American Heart Association - Heart Check Mark" to choose more nutrient dense foods.

Questions?

References

- American Heart Association - Heart Check :
  - https://www.heart.org/en/healthy-living/company-collaboration/heart-check-certification/heart-check-in-the-grocery-store/certified-foods-in-the-grocery-store
- American Heart Association - How Can I Eat More Nutrient Dense Foods?
  - https://www.heart.org/en/healthy-living/healthy-eating/eat-smart/nutrition-basics/how-can-i-eat-more-nutrient-dense-foods#:~:text=Nutrient-dense%20foods%20are%20rich,skinless%20poultry%2C%20nuts%20and%20legumes
- Most Nutrient Dense Foods on the Planet by Kris Gunnars, BS & Adrienne Seitz, MS, RD, LDN
  - https://www.healthline.com/nutrition/11-most-nutrient-dense-foods-on-the-planet