

Antioxidants – An Ounce of Prevention.

Did you know the leading source of antioxidants in this country is coffee?

What are Antioxidants?

Antioxidants are chemical combinations from the food you eat. They are supposed to slow down the aging process and possibly prevent such chronic illnesses as heart disease, cancer and Alzheimer's disease. Just walk down a grocery store aisle and you'll see many food labels listing antioxidants.

So, are antioxidant-rich foods really "super foods?" Could the items in your refrigerator and pantry be your key to a longer, disease-free life? Maybe.

Below are some of the most commonly used antioxidants and their possible benefits:

- Vitamin A – May protect cell membranes and fatty tissues, and help repair damage caused by pollution.
- Vitamin C – May help fight cancer and the effects of smoking and air pollution.
- Vitamin E – May boost the immune system and, when used with vitamin C, fight heart disease.

Do They Really Work?

Studies are still being done to find out for sure if they really do work. However, the benefits of a healthy diet rich in fruits and vegetables cannot be argued. Choose from a variety of food groups and try to select your fruits and vegetables from a rainbow of colors. Aim for at least five servings of fruits and vegetables every day, as they contain many antioxidants. Don't forget whole grains, nuts, and beans, which are also good for you.

The following are better antioxidant-rich food choices.

1. Red kidney beans
2. Artichokes (cooked)
3. Prunes
4. Blueberries
5. Raspberries
6. Strawberries
7. Red Delicious apples
8. Granny Smith apples
9. Pecans
10. Russet potatoes

If you would like more information on how to select healthier food choices or to enroll in our weight management program, *Lean on Me*, call Health Education and Wellness at **877-5356**.

Good health takes a good plan.SM

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