

EAT A RAINBOW

To help protect ourselves against COVID-19, other than frequent hand washing, maintaining a healthy diet to boost our immune system will strengthen our defence against external pathogens. According to some studies, each person should eat more than 15 kinds of food every day; the more types of nutrients we absorb, the stronger we get. A balanced diet, regular exercise, adequate sleep, and plenty of water are some of the main points to help boost our immune system.

Nutritionists recommend consuming less sugar and eating more plant food. Fruits and vegetables of different colours are rich in various vitamins, minerals, dietary fibre, phytochemicals, and other nutrients. Phytochemicals are natural compounds other than vitamins and minerals found in fruits and vegetables. Some benefits include anti-oxidation, anti-inflammation, and strengthening of the immune system functions. Some types of phytochemicals are flavonoids, carotenoids, indoles, and isoflavones. Fruits and vegetables of different colours each contain different kinds of phytochemicals. For example, carrots are rich in carotenoids, tomatoes are rich in lycopene, dark green vegetables contain chlorophyll and lutein, turmeric contains curcumin, and onions and garlic contain organic sulphide, allicin, and quercetin.

The following chart lists the key nutrients and examples of different coloured produce:



| | | |
|-----------------|---|--|
| Red | Vitamin C, anthocyanins, carotenoids, polyphenols, anthocyanins, lycopene | Tomatoes, watermelons, strawberries, apples, pomegranates, cherries, pink grapefruits |
| Orange & Yellow | Beta-carotene, alpha carotene, flavonoids, lutein, zeaxanthin, potassium, vitamin C | Citrus, pumpkins, pineapples, papayas, bananas, carrots, cantaloupe, yam |
| Green | Carotenoids, lutein, folate, vitamin K, potassium, chlorophyll, indoles | Green leaf vegetables, broccoli, cucumbers, kiwi, Brussels sprouts, avocados, honeydew |
| Blue & Purple | Anthocyanins, phenolic | Plums, eggplants, grapes, blueberries, blackberries, beets |
| White | Anthoxanthins, allicin, quercetin, indoles, glucosinolates | Cauliflower, onions, garlic, mushrooms, potatoes, turnips |

Researchers also recommend eating foods that are rich in antioxidants, such as spinach, broccoli, cabbage, carrots, onions, garlic, berries (blueberries, cranberries), citrus (lemon, orange, grapefruit), grapes, avocados, and tomatoes. Antioxidants protect the body’s cells and tissues to fight free radicals, which are harmful compounds if their levels become too high in your body. Examples of antioxidants include vitamins C, and E, selenium, and carotenoids, such as beta-carotene, lycopene, lutein, and zeaxanthin.

Beta-carotene

Beta-carotene is a type of vitamin A that can protect the lungs against carcinogenic toxins. It is the red, orange, and yellow pigment found in many fruits, vegetables, and whole grains. Beta-carotene is a powerful antioxidant that is known to help protecting cells, boosting the immune system, and keeping the reproductive system healthy.

Vitamin B6

Vitamin B6 is mainly present in carrots, apples, bananas, green leafy vegetables, and sweet potatoes. Moderate intake of vitamin B6 can strengthen the umbrella for the lungs, fight against foreign substances, and promote lung health.

Vitamin C

Many studies have shown that antioxidants can slow down or prevent cancer. Greater consumption of fresh produce such as citrus, bell pepper, green leafy vegetables, berries, tomatoes and pumpkins is recommended. Vitamin C is also rich in antioxidants, which can help improve the immune system.

Vitamin D

Vitamin D has been proven to inhibit the growth and metastasis of cancer cells. At the same time, Calcitriol, an active form of vitamin D, can regulate cell growth, and limit the blood supply to tumours, and reduce cancer metastasis. Vitamin D can also be obtained through egg yolks or fish.

Vitamin E

Vitamin E has excellent antioxidant capacity, which can reduce the damage caused by ozone and lung pollutants. Eggs, wheat germ, liver, unrefined vegetable oil and dark green vegetables are all rich in vitamin E, and good for your health.



FRESH PRODUCE BOXES
FOR YOUR CONVENIENCE

While everyone is being urged to stay at home during the pandemic, Fresh Direct Produce is now selling convenient fresh produce boxes packed with a mix of fruits and vegetables or salad blend, prepared by Islands West Produce. Speak with your Fresh Direct Produce Sales Rep for more information and inquiries!



| | | | |
|-----------------------|---|---|--|
| Classic Vegetable Box | 1.5 lb. Broccoli Buds 1.5 lb. Cauliflower Buds 1.25 lb. Carrot Sticks 1.25 lb. Celery Sticks 1 each Zucchini 1 clamshell Grape Tomatoes 1 bag Snap Peas | Fruit Box | 4 each Avocados 4 each Royal Gala Apples 2 each Mangoes 2 each Lemons 2 each Limes 5 each Oranges 1 clamshell Strawberries |
| Juicing Box | 2 lbs. Diced Beets 2 lbs. Diced Celery 2 lbs. Diced Carrot 0.5 lbs. Peeled Ginger 2 lbs. Shaved Kale | Prepared Vegetable Box | 2lb. Red and White Nugget Potatoes 2 lb. Diced Butternut Squash 2 lb. Broccoli Buds 2 lb. Sliced Carrot |
| Salad Box | 3lb. Tossed Salad 1 bunch of Green Onions 1 each Cucumber 2 each of 5 x 6 Tomatoes 1 each of Red, Yellow or Orange Peppers 1 each of Red Onions |   | |

* Boxes may not be exactly as shown depending on stock

FIDDLEHEADS

Fiddleheads are the tightly coiled tips of young ferns. They are found primarily along fresh waterways in the Maritime Provinces, Quebec, Ontario, and Vancouver Island, and are only available in early spring for a short period. These little tender coils can be lightly sautéed, steamed, boiled, or eaten raw, and they taste similar to asparagus.

Fiddleheads contain no fat and are low in calories. They are a good source of vitamin C, niacin, and potassium.

Choose small, firm, and tightly furled fiddleheads. Avoid those that are starting to uncurl, or discoloured. They are very delicate and should be used shortly after bringing them home. To prepare, rinse fiddleheads under cold running water to remove any dirt, grit, and the brown membrane called rementa. Similar to apples or bananas, fiddleheads go through a natural oxidation process once exposed to air, the ends of the vegetable turn to a dark green/brown colour, so the discoloured ends will need to be trimmed before cooking.

Add washed fiddleheads into a pot of boiling water with a pinch of salt, cook for approx. 10 minutes. Drain water, season to taste with salt, pepper, and butter or garnish with garlic, lemon, or parmesan cheese.



Organic ZUCCHINI



Zucchini, also known as courgette, is a member of the gourd family. It is a summer squash harvested while immature, and its rind is still tender and edible. The skin is usually dark green, but it can also be light green, orange, or deep yellow.

Although it is often said to be a vegetable, zucchini is botanically classified as a fruit. Whether eaten raw or cooked, there are many ways to enjoy zucchini. Unlike cucumbers, which are best eaten raw, zucchini is usually served cooked. It can be steamed, boiled, grilled, stuffed, baked, barbecued or fried. Zucchini can also be used as a pasta alternative by slicing it into “zoodles” with a spiral slicer or mandoline.

Zucchini is very low in calories, contains zero fat, and is high in water and fibre. It contains significant amounts of vitamins B6, C, and K, riboflavin, folate, potassium, manganese, and antioxidant.

