

FRUITS: DELICIOUS FLAVOURS, sweetness, colours and textures! Fruits are quick to eat, easy to digest and give a burst of good energy. Yes, fruits are God's sweet treats for you!

Did you know the kind of sugar so freely poured into biscuits, cakes, desserts, confectionery, chocolate and drinks is completely unnecessary and even harmful for human health?¹

Amazing! So just WHY are natural fruits so good for people?

Fruits contain small quantities of many substances which can help protect the human body, and help prevent damage in the trillions of cells in our bodies.² Some of these substances are only found in fresh fruit!³

Scientists don't know yet how many different substances there are in fruits and vegetables, but there may be 100,000!⁴ There is convincing research to show fruits reduce the risk of cancers such as mouth, pharynx and larynx, oesophagus, lung and stomach and probably protect against cancers of the pancreas, liver and colorectum.⁵

And remember, fruit is high in fibre and that's good for lowering cholesterol, keeping bowels regular and clean, and losing weight! Aim to eat two pieces of fruit every day! Wow, doesn't that make you want to grab a piece of fruit ! Sweet!

1. Appleton, N. *Dr Lick the sugar habit* (1988) P. 13

2. Stanton R. (2007). *Foods that harm, foods that heal*. Readers Digest pp 180-181.3, 6.

3. Koch, M.U. (2007). *Laugh with health - Your complete guide to health, nutrition and natural foods* (second colour edition). P. 43

4. Food, nutrition, physical activity and the prevention of cancer. Second Expert Panel Report by the World Cancer Research Fund and the American Institute for Cancer Research (online version), Part 2, P. 79.

5. Food, nutrition, physical activity and the prevention of cancer. Second Expert Panel Report by the World Cancer Research Fund and the American Institute for Cancer Research (online version). Chapter 12, p. 370.

VEGETABLES: If you have grown vegetables from seeds, you will know that different tiny seeds need different sorts of weather and soil to germinate and grow into colourful, good food. That's because each vegetable contains different gifts of nutritional goodies - to build health and strength in people (and animals too).

Vegetables come in all colours of the rainbow, and their flavours are just as interesting and tasty. And if you think vegetables are just plain boring with no taste, give sugary foods a rest for a few days and the flavours of vegetables seem to burst with joy upon the tongue!

The goodness that vegetables give to our human bodies is just as grand! Bright yellow, orange and red vegetables contain beta carotene and that means a boost to the immune system, improving eyesight, healing wounds, reducing high blood pressure, cleansing the liver, reducing acne, mucous, and the length of infections, viruses and colds!¹

Pumpkins contain beta cryptoxanthin, which research has shown to clearly and directly benefit the human respiratory system.²

Vegetables from the cruciferous family, that's broccoli, cabbage, cauliflower, turnip, kohlrabi, brussels sprouts, swede (rutabagas) contain something called indoles, which stimulate the body to protect against certain types of cancer.³ And broccoli contains sulforaphane which is able to destroy the bacteria which causes most stomach ulcers.⁴

What about leafy greens? If your children will only eat the crispy, crunchy "iceberg" lettuces - let them! The iceberg lettuce is apparently the greatest source of the mineral silicon for skin, nails and particularly for hair growth!⁵ Kale, a cabbage-like leafy green starts to produce special anti-cancer goodies the moment it is cut or chewed.⁶

And then there's beetroot with a goodie called betacyanin (found in all purple fruits and vegetables) a powerful anti-cancer pigment!⁷

Don't forget fibre - every vegetable contains fibre, well researched as protection against colorectum and oesophagus cancers and able to reduce excess cholesterol. Remember: foods from animals contain NO fibre at all.

1,2,4,5. Koch, M. U. (2007). *Laugh with health- Your complete guide to health, nutrition and natural foods* (second colour edition). pp. 61-77

3,7. Stanton, R. (2007). *Foods that harm, foods that heal. Readers Digest.* pp. 371-373.

6. Jockers, D. Discover the superfood power of kale. Retrieved July 31, 2010 from www.naturalnews.com

WHOLE GRAINS: What are they? Grains are the seeds of plants, and most grain plants look like large grasses. You have probably eaten at least two of these grains: Rice, barley, rye, oats, wheat, millet and corn.

All these grains are grown as crops for human or animal food, and each variety grows best in a specific climate. Oats grow well in cooler climates, while wheat and rice need hotter temperatures to produce a good crop. There are lots of other less well known grains too, such as kamut and spelt. And there are seeds, which people cook and eat like grains - buckwheat and quinoa are seeds. The very first evidence of an ancient form of wheat was found in the "Fertile Crescent" in the Middle East, not too far from where Noah's ark landed, *on the mountains of Ararat. Genesis 8:4*¹

The "whole" in whole grains simply means the grain is grown, harvested, stored and very little or no milling happens. Think about rolled oats - whole oat groats which are lightly steamed and rolled flat! Whole wheat flour (called wholemeal in some countries) is whole wheat berries ground into flour.

But what about white bread? To make white bread the whole wheat is milled to remove the outside bran layer (where the fibre and good oils are) and most of the germ (where the protein is). A white powder remains, which is mostly starch (also called refined carbohydrate), with very little fibre, vitamins or minerals.

A loaf of bread made with whole wheat flour will feel quite a lot heavier in your hand than a loaf of white. The whole wheat bread will be a definite shade of brown and you will chew the bread as it has texture. And did we mention the flavour? Mmmm lots of flavour!

Whole grains are a great source of **carbohydrate**, fibre, B vitamins, minerals and phytochemicals (special plant substances for keeping the body healthy).

You may have heard scientists and doctors talking about eating less carbohydrates. Confused?

What they mean is eating less refined carbohydrates - that squidgy white bread, fluffy white rice, slippery white pasta, and sugary and fatty cakes, biscuits and pastries. Why? Because refined carbohydrates have very little nutritional goodness left after processing, have very little fibre and usually dump a lot of energy into the bloodstream quickly. All these factors mean the body has to work harder than it was designed to, just to digest refined carbohydrates, even taking precious minerals and vitamins from the blood and bones just to digest that sugar doughnut, bowl of white rice, or piece of chocolate cake!

Complex carbohydrates are foods like whole grains, potatoes with skin, most vegetables and fruits and other foods like dried beans, peas and lentils. The nutritional goodness in complex carbohydrates gives the body energy for quite a few hours, as well as vitamins, minerals and other as yet undiscovered nutrients. You can almost feel your body breathing a sigh of relief when you feed it high nutrient fuel!

There is a rating scale showing how quickly or slowly energy from different foods is released into the bloodstream. You may have heard of GI (glycaemic index) or GL (glycaemic load). The lower the number assigned to the food, the slower the food is converted into energy the body can use.²

The important thing to remember is that whole grains contain a wide range of gifts for our bodies, much more than highly refined grains ever can! Why? Because God designed whole grains for people and animals!

1. Wheat and wheat products in the Bible. Retrieved from <http://www.odu.edu/~lmusselm/plant/bible/wheatandproducts.php>

2. Home of the glycemic index, University of Sydney. Retrieved from <http://www.glycemicindex.com/>

DRIED BEANS, PEAS AND LENTILS: Open your mind now because with a little bit of care, these dried up has beans transform into moist, tasty, savoury protein filled dishes! Dried beans and peas are called Legumes in some countries and Pulses in others. And Lentils, are sometimes put in their own category.

Think protein, for the entire range of Legumes like chick peas, kidney and pinto beans, cannellini, haricot beans, and lentils contain more protein than any other plant foods. For repairing cells and building new ones - protein is the nutrient you want! Plant proteins are a safe way to get protein. Eating a diet high in animal foods (such as beef, lamb, pork, chicken and fish) and low in complex carbohydrates has now been linked with a greater risk of death for all diseases compared to eating a diet high in vegetable proteins and vegetable fats such as nuts, seeds, avocados and olives.¹ There are no risks for developing disease from eating legumes and lentils as long as they are soaked and cooked well. Although the little rhyme “Beans, beans the wonderful fruit, the more you eat the more you.....” can apply to some people when they first start eating more legumes and lentils!^{2,3}

Want to clean out your digestive system and lower cholesterol? Eat legumes and lentils! There are hundreds of different beans, peas and lentils. All contain good amounts of B vitamins, iron, potassium and other minerals.⁴ If you want to lower your risk of heart disease, stomach cancer and have extra energy then eat more legumes and lentils!^{5,6}

A bit wary of legumes and lentils? Get your mind in tune by thinking of different food cultures.

Almost all cultures have a history of eating legumes or lentils with grains. Think of peanut butter whole wheat sandwiches (yes, peanuts are a legume, not a nut). Or hummus, a chick pea spread or dip made of chick peas, eaten with bread or rice and originally from the Middle East. Or how about kidney beans, rice and corn for a delicious Mexican meal. Minestrone soup from Italy with white cannellini beans and loads of chopped vegetables with crusty bread. Dahl, the lentil stew from India, eaten with rice or breads - and that's just for starters!

Don't wait till next week - cook up some legumes or lentils today!

1. Fung, T., van Dam, R. M., Hankinson, S. E., Stampfer, M., Willet, W. C., & Hu, F. B. Low-carbohydrate diets and all-cause and cause-specific mortality: Two cohort studies. *Annals of Internal Medicine*, 153(5), 289-298. Abstract retrieved September 7, 2010 from <http://www.annals.org/content/153/5/289.abstract>

2. Stanton, R. (2007). Foods that harm, foods that heal. *Readers Digest*. pp. 232-233.

3. A tried and true way to avoid flatulence while the body adapts to eating more legumes is to soak the beans as usual (overnight in double their quantity in water), drain and freeze the soaked, uncooked beans. Then when you want to cook them, simply defrost and cook as usual. The easiest way to cook large legumes such as chick peas, kidney, pinto and haricot beans is to place them in a crockpot, cover with fresh water and cook on low for several hours.

4. Food, nutrition, physical activity and the prevention of cancer. Second Expert Panel Report by the World Cancer Research Fund and the American Institute for Cancer Research (online version). Chapter 12, p. 370.

NUTS: DO YOU KNOW THAT EATING JUST 30-60 grams (1-2 oz) of nuts daily can help keep your heart and blood healthier than if you didn't eat nuts at all? ¹ And do you know the same handful of nuts (even peanuts which are not a nut but a legume) can satisfy your hunger for longer than other snacks? Or that eating nuts, even though they are high in fat, can help keep weight stable, or even help weight loss?²

Until the 1990's most people didn't really take nuts seriously, unless they wanted a snack to go with a drink! Even today a chain of Australasian supermarkets sells bags of roasted peanuts labelled, "Beer Nuts."

Scientists are going nutty over nuts! As well as goodies like vitamin E, folic acid, copper and magnesium, protein, fibre and those magical phytochemicals, nuts contain "healthy fats" which amongst other things can lower bad cholesterol (LDL) and support good cholesterol (HDL). That means better health for your heart, blood vessels and circulation throughout your body. And walnuts contain good amounts of omega 3 fats- which help fight depression as well as heart disease!

Right now in the early 21st century, scientists have found that the fats in whole nuts are the healthiest for humans - healthier than butter, margarine, or oils. You see nuts are a whole food, with all the nutritional goodies just as God intended them to be. But remember most nuts come in very hard shells - perhaps God intended us to eat just a few nuts at once! Nuts which are good to eat: almonds, cashews, brazils, hazelnuts, walnuts, pistachios and pine nuts

and peanuts - which are a legume but have similar nutritional goodies to tree nuts.

1. Sabaté, J., Oda, K., & Ros, E. (2010). Nut consumption and blood lipid levels. A pooled analysis of 25 intervention trials. *Archives of Internal Medicine*, 170(9), 821-827. Retrieved from <http://archinte.ama-assn.org/cgi/content/abstract/170/9/821>
2. Wein, M. A., Sabaté, J. M., Ikle, D. N., Cole, S. E., & Kandeel, F.R. (2003). Almonds vs complex carbohydrates in a weight reduction program. *Int J Obes Relat Metab Disord*, 27(11), 1365-1372. Retrieved from <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/14574348>

LITTLE SEEDS, WITH FASCINATING SHAPES, colours and textures could turn your life around for the better.!

THE BEST PUMPKIN SEEDS are a dark, mysterious green. The darker they are, the more nutritional goodies they can give you especially when raw. Pumpkin seeds have amazing benefits, here are some of them: high in iron with enough vitamin C for the human body to absorb the iron; high protein; low in saturated fat and high in omega 3 fatty acids, with good monounsaturated and polyunsaturated fat; zinc, copper, magnesium and potassium. So pumpkin seeds are excellent for the blood, heart, circulation, brain, arthritis and a special goodie for men called “curcubitacins” for protection and relief from enlarged prostate glands!¹

SUNFLOWER SEEDS are smaller than pumpkin seeds and grey in colour, although they come from the mighty yellow sunflower which reaches toward the sun! If you want to keep your skin and joints supple and young, then eat a handful of sunflower seeds every day for they are rich in vitamin E. But that’s not all! Sunflower seeds are so good for you with protein, copper, magnesium for blood, skin, nerves and cartilage. There’s calcium and potassium for strong bones and muscles, and selenium (a mineral which is low in New Zealand soils). For such a nutritional powerhouse they are very reasonably priced! Have a handful of sun today!²

SESAME: Tiny brownish seeds, or creamy if they have had their outer coating removed, sesame is the best calcium food in the plant kingdom if you buy the whole sesame seed - the brownish type! In fact, sesame seeds are the ideal non-dairy calcium food - more calcium than cheddar cheese! Another plus for

sesame seeds is the high methionine content. Methionine is one of the amino acids which we must eat (because our bodies cannot make it). Amino acids combine in different ways to make proteins in the body, and adding sesame to legume dishes will really boost the methionine. Sesames also contain copper, some B vitamins, iron, magnesium (for better sleep and reduction of migraines), and phosphorous, zinc and lecithin, as well as lignans a special kind of healthy fibre which may be able to fight some cancers. They do look beautiful as a topping or coating on breads, muffins, scones, casseroles or rissoles or burgers, but they are even better for you when a little sesame is ground and mixed IN those healthy giving foods before you cook them! Or buy a jar of WHOLE tahini.³

FLAX SEEDS: As with all seeds, flax seeds have been around and used by people for centuries. Oil from flax seeds, also known as linseed, was used by the Romans and Greeks as a food.

They are tiny, shiny, flat brown seeds (or golden) with a hard coating. Inside are mighty oils which can keep your arteries clear, and special nutritional goodies such as lignans which can fight against some cancers. If you eat flax seeds whole, many of them will be digested whole and reappear whole too! Whole flax seeds are used in breads and biscuits adding good fibre and releasing some of their goodness into the digestive system. But flax seeds are like carrots - eating raw carrots is great for some of their goodies, eating cooked carrots releases other goodies. So go for the grind to release the fullness of flax seeds. A teaspoon or so of freshly ground flax seeds are great sprinkled over porridge or muesli, over steamed vegetables just before serving, and buzzed up in a blender with other fruit smoothie ingredients! About a tablespoon or three teaspoons a day is a good serving.^{4,5}

1,2,3,4. Koch, M. U. (2007). Laugh with health- Your complete guide to health, nutrition and natural foods (second colour edition). pp. 104-108, 142.

5. Stanton, R. (2007). Foods that harm, foods that heal. Readers Digest. pp. 235, 237.

Aren't you amazed how God designed plant foods as fuel, full of flavours and to satisfy even the greatest hunger!

Here are some very simple recipes for enjoying plant foods. All you need is a board, a knife and in some cases a pot or pan with a lid and a wooden spoon for stirring! For recipes using more kitchen equipment, like blenders and ovens take a look at later books in this series.

Fresh Fruit Platter

A Fresh Fruit Platter is always popular - colourful, attractive, fresh, juicy, quick, delicious and s-t-r-e-t-c-h-e-s fruit a long way!

Choose fresh, ripe fruit in season. Wash. Peel fruits where necessary. Cut fruit into attractive shapes and arrange nicely on a platter to suit. Use whatever is in your garden, fruit box or shops this week. Only got a couple of pieces of fresh fruit? Then dip into your cupboards for dried fruit too!

Tricks and tips: Fruit in season where you live will always be freshest: Strawberries, blueberries, raspberries (a bit squishy unless very fresh), peaches, nectarines, apricots, bananas, apples, kiwifruit, pears, grapes, plums, oranges....

Of course tropical fruits may never be in season where you live! But when possible, we love a fresh melon, pineapple or mango!

If the Platter is for a few hours in the future, use apples, pears and bananas with care. They will turn an unattractive brown when sliced unless you dip each slice in fresh lemon juice - and some varieties will turn brown even after being given the lemon dip!

All Over the World Veggie Surprise

One of our sons flattered with students who cooked Veggie Surprise almost every night. The surprise was that you never knew which veggies would be in the dish! All over this world, you will find a version of this simple vegetable stew where vegetables and flavourings are cooked together until they meld into a delicious mixture!! Ragout in France, Curry in India and well...you get the picture!

1 large onion	1 can of chopped tomatoes*
1 clove of garlic	a small handful of fresh herbs
2 carrots sliced or grated	or 1 tsp dried herbs
4 cups any green vegetables	salt to taste

Put about 1/4 cup of water in a large saucepan or frying pan. Add a small splash of oil if you wish, for added flavour. Heat. Add sliced or chopped onion.

Stir about on a medium heat until the onion is limp. Add the chopped garlic, carrot and chopped green vegetables (and dried herbs if using). Stir about for a few minutes then add the tomatoes from the can, juice and all.

Simmer for 5-15 minutes, until your vegetables are nearly cooked. Add the handful of chopped fresh herbs if using and salt to taste. If you like your stew with a thicker sauce, you can mix 3 tablespoons of cold water with 2 tablespoons of cornflour and stir into the bubbling stew until thickened.

Tips and Tricks: Use any kind of green vegetables in season or frozen. Serve over pasta, with Fluffy Brown Rice, steamed, baked or mashed potatoes or on toast. Add 2 cups of cooked legumes such as chick peas, kidney beans or lentils.

** You can use about 4 large fresh chopped tomatoes, just cook for a little longer. Or use coconut milk instead of tomatoes - or half and half! Change the herbs for turmeric and cumin seeds!*

Fluffy Brown Rice

Brown rice too chewy? Then this recipe is just for you! Did you know the most common reason for not enjoying whole grains is under cooking?

So here is a method which produces fluffy brown rice! This method, dry toasting the rice before boiling with water, changes the long starch chains in each grain of rice into shorter dextrin chains. This gives fluffy rice, and makes the rice easier to digest too! You can't fail! But you do need to add a new habit - allow about 35 minutes to cook the rice!

1 cup of brown rice (short, medium or long grain)

2 cups of boiling water

1/2 tsp salt (optional)

Use a pot or pan large enough to take at least 5 cups. The pot needs a lid. Add the cup of rice to the pot. Turn the heat onto medium high, and shake the brown rice around in the pot, over the heat for 3-5 minutes, until most of the grains look a little toasted and there is an aroma of toasted rice in the air!

Take the pot off the heat, make sure the pot lid is within reach, stand at arms length from the pot and add the 2 cups of boiling water (and salt if you choose). The hot rice and water goes mildly volcanic at this stage. Pop the lid on and put the lidded pot back on the heat.

Turn the heat down to medium low, and cook until the rice is swollen and there are little steam holes on the top of the rice. Tip the pot sideways to see if all the liquid has been absorbed. If not, cook a few minutes longer. If all the water has gone, then rest the pot off the heat for a few more minutes to finish cooking.

Tips and Tricks: Fluffy Brown Rice can be used for LOTS of delicious, easy meals. Over the page are two ideas!

Tropical Rice

Put 4 cups of freshly cooked Fluffy Brown Rice into a large bowl, add 1/4 cup of coconut, 1 tin of pineapple pieces with juice, 3/4 cup chopped dates and 1 cup of soy, oat, almond or coconut milk. Cool, then serve, or put in a cool place, covered, overnight. (Try adding chopped fruit before serving!)

Chinese-style Rice

4 cups hot cooked brown rice	1/2 cup per person Broccoli/Cauliflower
1 cup cashew nuts or pieces	3 tablespoons soy sauce
2-3 carrots sliced in rings	sesame oil and salt to taste
1 large onion sliced	2 TB cornflour and 3 TB water mixed

Wash and drain cashews (pieces are better value for money). Heat a large frying pan and toss cashew pieces about until toasty, then tip on a plate and set aside.

Now sauté carrot in the same pan with a little water until nearly tender. Tip sliced onion on top of carrot. Pile sliced broccoli and cauliflower on top of onion. Add a little more water.

Cover and steam until broccoli is bright green and crunchy to taste. Remove veggies with slotted spoon to large serving dish, add rice and cashews to serving dish.

Now make sauce in frying pan with 3 tablespoons of soy sauce, a few drops of sesame oil to taste, and 1 cup of water. Bring to boil then thicken with the cornflour and water.

Savoury Lentils

Our family loves this way of eating lentils. We like this for an easy meal during the week, or on toast during the weekend for breakfast. You can keep this simple, or add all sorts of vegetables, sometimes we even add finely chopped brazil nuts - especially good on a cold winter night. This stores well in the refrigerator for 2-3 days.

2 chopped onions	1 tsp salt (or to taste)
2 cups brown, green or black lentils	freshly boiled water
2 cloves garlic	handful of fresh herbs

Put a little water, or a small splash of olive oil to heat in a large saucepan. Add chopped onion and stir about until limp. Add chopped garlic. You can add up to 2 cups chopped vegetables like carrot, courgette, potato, celery, pumpkin. If you added the vegetables, stir about for about five minutes.

Now stir in the lentils (if you spot twigs or tiny pieces of gravel, sprinkle the lentils on a flat tray and pick out any weird bits and pieces.)

Add hot water from your kettle to cover the lentils in the saucepan and bring to a boil on high heat. Toss the salt in. Turn down heat to medium for about 30 minutes or until the lentils are soft, they shouldn't be chewy at all!

Now toss in the handful of fresh chopped herbs such as basil, parsley, rosemary, sage, chives, thyme. Mmm. I'm hungry!

Snacky Seeds

Tamari is wheat free soy sauce. Eat a small handful of Snackey Seeds a day, instead of potato crisps or roasted nuts. Also very nice sprinkled on salads or any other savoury food.

1 cup pumpkin seeds
1 cup sunflower seeds

2 tsp tamari (or soy sauce)

Heat a large fry pan and add the pumpkin and sunflower seeds, tossing quite a lot, until the seeds start to swell, crackle and pop and smell toasty. Tip into a metal plate or baking tin and toss 1 tsp tamari over the hot

seeds. Stir. The sauce will dry on the surface of the hot seeds.

Leave for a few minutes to cool before eating! We have found these very popular with men as a snack!

