

# POWER FOODS

## GLOSSARY

Free radical - a compound which can potentially damage human cells and initiate disease processes.

Antioxidant - a compound which can help to neutralize or inactivate free radicals.

Phytochemical - (phyto = plant; *greek*) substances in plant foods in addition to vitamins and minerals which exert protective effects.

Carotenoids - a yellow-orange pigment (phytochemical) in fruits and vegetables which may have protective properties against degenerative diseases. Beta-carotene is just one of hundreds of carotenoids (beta-carotene, lycopene, lutein, zeaxanthin etc.).

### 1. BEANS: lentils, split peas, soy, navy, great northern, chickpeas, pinto, black, kidney, adzuki, anasazi etc.

- Good source of protein [incomplete, except soybean] and complex carbohydrates, low in fat, no cholesterol and rich in B-vitamins
- High in fiber [soluble and insoluble] which can aid elimination and gastrointestinal problems; lower LDL (bad) cholesterol and improve blood sugar (glucose) control in diabetics

SOY: tofu, tempeh, miso, soy milk (liquid K dry), soy flour, soy nuts, texturized vegetable protein, soybeans (dry, fresh or frozen), soy sprouts, soy grits, natto, soy cheeses, soy yogurt, ground tofu, soy burgers, soy sausages, soy ice cream, etc. (Evaluate based on the ingredient list and taste of the product.)

- Complete plant protein
- Soy protein can help to lower LDL (bad) cholesterol
- Many phytochemicals which have anti-cancer activity
- Phytoestrogens, weak plant estrogens, may help to reduce menopausal symptoms and afford breast cancer protection
- *Benefits not apparent with soy sauce or soy oil*

### 2. VEGETABLES

CRUCIFEROUS: cabbage, broccoli/ brussels sprouts, cauliflower, kale, *cowards*, *mustard greens*, rutabaga, turnip, arugala, watercress, radishes, horseradish etc.

- High in fiber, some "*very high*" in calcium (1/2 cup steamed greens contain approximately 75\* mg.)
- Excellent source of indoles, phytochemicals which stimulate the immune systems production of anti-cancer enzymes and antioxidants which help to inactivate free radicals

## ORANGE, YELLOW & RED FRUITS/VEGETABLES

- Excellent source of the pigment beta-carotene and other carotenoids which act as antioxidants and can be very beneficial in the prevention of degenerative diseases (cataracts, heart disease, cancer, arthritis, macular degeneration etc.)
- Very easy to obtain protective levels through FOODS

**MUSHROOMS:** shiitake, enoki, reishi, maitake, tea ear/wood ear, morel, portabella etc.

- Good source of B-vitamins and copper
- Shiitake, Enoki, Reishi, Maitake show promise as immune system boosters
- Tea ear/Wood ear act as anticoagulants to help keep the blood from clotting (helpful in heart disease)

**GREENS;** dandelion, mustard, beet and collard greens, kale, swiss chard, sorrel and broccoli raab, etc.

- High in carotenoids and other phytochemicals, vitamins C and K, folate, iron, calcium and fiber

**SEA VEGETABLES:** wakame, nori, kombu, dulse, alaria, laver, kanten, agar, arame, kelp, etc.

- High mineral content including: potassium, calcium, magnesium, iron and iodine. Also high in fiber, vitamin C, vitamin K and beta-carotene

**3. WHOLE GRAINS:** amaranth, quinoa, millet, triticale, barley, buckwheat [kasha], teff, bulgur, spelt and whole wheat couscous etc.

- Excellent source of complex carbohydrates, low in fat, rich in both soluble and insoluble fiber, B-vitamins and trace minerals
- Look for the term "*whole*" when selecting grain products such as breads, crackers, pastas and cereals [ex. whole wheat flour vs. wheat flour]
  - Bran:** high in insoluble fiber; extremely helpful for elimination, prevention of colon cancer and overall health of the gastrointestinal tract
  - Germ:** more fat, thus an excellent source of vitamin E; protective levels of vitamin E, one of the antioxidants, are very difficult to achieve in a low-fat diet.
- Refined grains lose approximately 80% of vitamins/minerals and retain only about 25% of the fiber

**4. NUTS/SEEDS:** flax, pumpkin, walnuts, almonds, sesame, chestnuts, brazil, soy etc.

- Excellent source of phytochemicals (ex. lignans), antioxidants, including Vitamin E (also an immune system booster), selenium and B-vitamins
- Rich in Essential Fatty Acids [EFA's] which our body cannot make and must be obtained via the foods we eat; too little EFA's may potentially set us up for health problems

**5. FISH:** Fattier fish: salmon, herring, mackerel, albacore tuna, bluefin tuna, trout, pompano etc.  
Leaner fish: cod, flounder, sole, halibut, shellfish, grouper, orange roughy, red snapper etc.

- Good source of protein and B-vitamins
- Fattier fish are excellent sources of Omega-3 fatty acids (found in smaller amounts in lean fish and shellfish). Omega-3 fatty acids can help to increase HDL's [good cholesterol] and can help the body make beneficial hormones which reduce inflammation in conditions such as arthritis, psoriasis and inflammatory bowel disease