

## Taste the rainbow for better health

by Shannon Spence

A diet rich in fruits and vegetables offers more health benefits than you can count on both hands, including lower blood pressure, reduced risk of heart disease and stroke, cancer prevention, lower risk of obesity and digestive problems, and improved blood sugar levels. Even more, eating the [daily recommended doses](#) of fruits and veggies will help you feel full longer and keep your appetite in check.

“There are so many people who rely on supplements and vitamins when we should be able to get most of what we need from our food,” says registered nurse and nutrition advocate Kristin Woodruff. “Make sure you’re getting as many colors on your plate as possible. That is the original multivitamin.”

While the research surrounding the effects of color on health is ongoing, here’s a look at the potential health benefits of tasting the rainbow with some help from Dr. David Heber, author of *What Color is your Diet?*

	Health benefits	Sources	Fun fact
<b>RED</b>	Contain lycopene , a powerful antioxidant associated with reduced risk of some cancers and protection against heart attacks	Tomatoes and tomato-based products; watermelon, pink grapefruit, guava, cranberries	Cooked tomato sauces may offer the most health benefits. The heating process allows the body to more readily absorb carotenoids, including lycopene.
<b>BLUE/PURPLE</b>	Rich in anthocyanin, antioxidants that support a healthy heart and regulate blood pressure	Eggplant (especially the skin), blueberries, blackberries, prunes, plums, pomegranates	The richer the color, the riper the fruit/veggie. Blueberries have the highest antioxidant activity of all.
<b>GREEN</b>	Contain lots of isothiocyanates, which live in the liver and help the body remove carcinogenic compounds; good source of vitamin K (essential for blood clot formation), folic acid, and potassium (helps lower blood pressure)	Broccoli, cabbage, bok choy, brussels sprouts	The isothiocyanates found in cruciferous vegetables may have cancer-fighting properties, particularly against colon and bladder cancers.

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# Health & wellness article

<b>YELLOW/GREEN</b>	Rich in lutein, which is especially good for eye health; good source of vitamin C	Avocado, kiwi, spinach and other leafy greens, pistachios	Pistachios contain lutein in the green skin that surrounds the nut.
<b>ORANGE/YELLOW</b>	High in vitamin C and beta-carotene (good sources of antioxidants), which convert to vitamin A, a vital nutrient for vision and immune function as well as skin and bone health	Carrots, mangos, cantaloupe, winter squash, sweet potatoes, pumpkins, apricots	Beta-carotenes may also help prevent some cancers, particularly lung, esophagus and stomach.
<b>WHITE/GREEN</b>	Rich in flavonoids, powerful antioxidants that help the body combat free radicals	Garlic, onions, endives, chives, celery, pears	<a href="#">A recent study</a> found that increasing your intake of white fruits (those with white flesh) may lower your risk of stroke.

As a Go365 member, you can earn up to 10 Points per week for tracking your fruit and veggie intake when you set a weekly food log in the [Go365 App](#).

For more nutritional facts and information on how to select and store specific fruits and veggies, visit <http://www.fruitsandveggiesmorematters.org/fruit-and-veggie-color-list>.

## Sources

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Interview with Kristin Woodruff, National Board Certified Health and Wellness Coach, RN

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