

Over 50? Eat More of These Foods!



After age 30, our metabolism begins to gradually decline so there is less room for empty calories foods such as sugary drinks, desserts, and potato chips. Certain healthy foods can help lower blood pressure and cholesterol and protect against diseases like type 2 diabetes. Eating a variety of whole foods really is the key to a healthy diet, but the following foods offer more nutritional bang for your buck than others.

1. Beans: Eating a daily serving of beans or lentils (3/4 cup) can help to lower LDL (“bad”) cholesterol by 5 percent. Another study in people with type 2 diabetes found that eating about a cup of beans or lentils per day as part of a healthy diet lowered hemoglobin A1c, a marker of blood sugar control, by 0.5%.

2. Oats: Oats are rich in soluble fiber and consuming at least 3 grams of this fiber a day (equivalent to 1.5 cups cooked oatmeal) has been shown to reduce total and LDL cholesterol levels by 5 to 10 percent.

3. Apples: A large apple supplies 5 grams of heart-healthy fiber, and research shows that eating apples daily can lower the risk for type 2 diabetes, and both total and LDL cholesterol to help keep your heart healthy.

4. Nuts: Snacking on 1 ounce of mixed nuts per day, instead of chips, crackers, and cookies, is an easy way to reduce the risk of heart attack, stroke, and death from heart disease by 28 percent.

5. Leafy Greens: People who ate one to two servings per day had the same cognitive ability as people 11 years younger who rarely ate greens. Baby spinach, collards, turnip greens and broccoli are all great choices.

6. Berries: Berries are another potential brain booster. Strawberries, blueberries, and their sister fruits are rich in phytochemicals that may help slow age-related memory decline by increasing blood flow to the brain and reducing harmful inflammation.

7. Yogurt: Yogurt, especially Greek varieties, can provide a generous dose of high-quality protein at breakfast and snack time, which may help to slow down the decline in muscle mass as we age. Cow’s milk yogurt and fortified non-dairy versions are also good sources of calcium, to help maintain bone health.

