



Nutrition Fact Sheet Antioxidant Table

Antioxidant is a term used to describe a wide range of nutrients which have the ability to neutralize free radical activity within the body.

Most of them can be destroyed by cooking, so overcooking fruit and vegetables is not beneficial – lightly steaming is best. Meat, dairy products and eggs can include antioxidants, but cooking again destroys them (pasteurized milk is heated). So eating a proportion of raw fruit and vegetables can ensure you get better levels.

Levels found in food are very dependent on the soil it has been grown in, whether it was picked ripe, and how long it has been stored so it is almost impossible to know whether the food you are buying from a supermarket is going to be nutritionally useful – studies have shown oranges to have from almost no Vitamin C in them, to the high levels you would expect. So getting antioxidants from your diet alone is always going to be something of a lottery. It is my belief that it is highly unlikely you will be able to get all you need from diet alone due to the high levels of depletion we see nowadays in soil nutrients.

However, if you need to look to diet alone for antioxidants, what are good choices? Outlined below are the major antioxidant nutrients and generally good sources.

Antioxidant	Optimum Daily Amount	Sources	Average Diet
Vitamin A (beta carotene)	1800 mcg	Carrots, spinach, peach, sweet potato, kale, red pepper, squash, apricots, broccoli, liver, butter, parmesan cheese, eggs, dried apricots	1000 mcg
Vitamin C	1000 mg +	Yellow pepper, papaya, guava, orange juice, Kiwi fruit, strawberries, broccoli, Brussels sprouts, potato, tomato, cooked blackcurrants, raw green peppers, home-made coleslaw	60-90 mg
Vitamin E	50-100 mg	Wheatgerm oil, sunflower seeds, hazel nuts, peanuts, sunflower oil (unheated), almonds, avocado, blackberries, tomato puree	9.0 mg
Flavonoids – quercetin, procyanidins, elagic acid, chlorogenic acid, catechins, carnosic acid	450- 800 mg	Red and yellow onions, shallots, apples, grapeseed, red wine, Maritime pine bark, walnuts, blackberries, pecan nuts, tomatoes, green tea, rosemary, dark chocolate, blueberries, citrus fruits, raisins, raspberries	145 mg
Carotenoids – Lutein, cryptoxanthin, zeaxanthin, lycopene	20 mg	Tomatos,	2-6 mg
Curcumin	N/A	Turmeric	N/A
Selenium	185 mcg	Liver, seafood, lean meat, whole grains, oatmeal, brown rice, brazil nuts, oily fish, sunflower seeds, mushrooms	35 mcg
Isoflavones – genistein, daidzein, glycitin	N/A	Soy beans,	N/A

Other antioxidants include co-enzyme Q10, glutathione, alpha-lipoic acid and melatonin.

The highest concentration of antioxidants is often found just under the skin, so wash, but don't throw away the skin for best results. Also high levels are found in the seeds of fruits, so eat these if you can – grapeseed in particular is very potent.

Colour is also a good indicator of antioxidant properties – the deeper the colour the better often.

Vitamins can be destroyed by too much heat or prolonged cooking, so when using vegetables it is best to steam them and don't overdo it – the crisper the better. Anything you can eat raw ie. carrots, celery, salads, fruits you will gain more benefit from – not least because the digestive enzymes in the food will be intact.

Frozen fruit and vegetables can often have higher levels than canned – and often even better than fresh which has been lying around for ages.