



newsletter

February 2025

Heart Health: Fruit and Vegetable Pigments

It is no secret that fruits and vegetables are frequently recommended for heart health, and for many reasons: they are lower in sodium (fresh/frozen/no salt added canned varieties), and they provide fiber, but did you know that the pigment of fruits and vegetables can be beneficial as well? Pigments are what give our fruits and vegetables their vibrant colors, but did you know that the assorted colors provide different health benefits?

Chlorophyll - Green (Broccoli, Spinach, Kale, Asparagus)

- Chlorophyll is responsible for the green pigment seen in many fruits and vegetables; they provide a source of antioxidants, can help decrease inflammation, and help maintain blood glucose levels, all that can be helpful in the prevention of chronic disease.

Carotenoids – Red/Yellow/Orange (Bell Peppers, Carrots, Sweet Potatoes, Cantaloupe)

- Carotenoids provide red/yellow/orange pigments in fruits and vegetables; they provide the highest antioxidant capacity out of all the pigments which can help reduce oxidative stress, which in turn can help prevent the onset of chronic diseases such as cardiovascular disease and cancer. Tangeretin and nobiletin, found in citrus fruit peels, could even help reduce serum (blood) cholesterol.

Flavonoids/Anthocyanins - Red/Blue/Purple (Blueberries, Red Cabbage, Acai Berries, Pomegranate)

- Flavonoids are responsible for the deep reds, blues, and purples found in various fruits and vegetables. These pigments are known for their cardioprotective, neuroprotective, anti-atherosclerosis, and anti-inflammatory capabilities.

Anthoxanthins - Colorless/Yellow (Cauliflower, Onions, Mushrooms, Chickpeas)

- Anthoxanthins are white, or a pale-yellowish, pigment that can provide the body with many health benefits, such as lower blood pressure and blood cholesterol. Anthoxanthin containing foods (specifically garlic) contain a compound called allicin, which is known for its antiviral, antifungal, and antibacterial properties.



FOR MORE INFORMATION PLEASE CONTACT:

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mindful
Enjoy Health

Strawberry Salad & Dark Chocolate Vinaigrette

Prep Time: 5 to 8 minutes | Cook time: 12 to 15 minutes | Yield: 4 Entrée Salads



INGREDIENTS

- 2 cups water
- $\frac{3}{4}$ cup uncooked red quinoa
- 1 package (12 ounces) spring lettuce mix
- $\frac{3}{4}$ cup fresh strawberries, quartered
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup sliced, blanched and toasted almonds
- $\frac{3}{4}$ cup julienned red onion
- 4 teaspoons chopped fresh mint leaves

Chocolate Vinaigrette

Ingredients

- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup balsamic vinegar
- 3 tablespoons orange juice
- 2 teaspoons olive oil
- 2 teaspoons granulated sugar
- $\frac{3}{4}$ teaspoon Dijon mustard
- 2 tablespoons unsweetened cocoa

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Cook red quinoa according to package directions. Refrigerate until ready to serve.
2. Chocolate Vinaigrette: Mix balsamic vinegar, orange juice, olive oil, granulated sugar and Dijon mustard until sugar is dissolved. Whisk in unsweetened cocoa until well blended. Refrigerate until ready to serve.
3. Salad Build: Toss lettuce and cooked quinoa to gently mix. Divide among 4 serving plates. Sprinkle each with $\frac{3}{4}$ cup strawberries, 2 tablespoons each red onion and almonds and 1 teaspoon mint. Drizzle each salad with 2 tablespoons Chocolate Vinaigrette.

Nutrition Facts:

Calories: 310, Carbs: 54g, Protein: 10g, Fat: 12g,
Sat. Fat: 1.5g, Cholesterol: 44g, Sodium: 60mg, Fiber: 8g