

5 Healthy Foods to Put on Your Grocery List

Looking to take your diet to the next nutritional level?

These powerhouse foods pack just as healthy a punch as the superfoods you are used to hearing about, such as kale, blueberries and salmon. Read on to learn about their health benefits, and how to add them to your meals.

1 Artichokes. This Mediterranean treat is low in calories and sodium, and free of fat and cholesterol. They are a good source of fiber to help with digestive issues, plus vitamin C, folate and magnesium. Artichokes are also chock-full of antioxidants that help keep your liver strong. Steam them for 25 to 45 minutes, depending on size, or until a petal near the center pulls out easily.

2 Beets. Celebrated for their powerful anti-inflammatory and vascular-protective effects, you can add them to kabobs and stir-fries. Try baking them alongside other root vegetables, such as carrots and sweet potatoes.

3 Cauliflower. A good source of vitamin C and folate, it is also fat-free, very low in sodium and cholesterol-free. If you like a colorful plate, try purple or orange cauliflower. Roast or steam cauliflower as a side dish, or puree it into soups.

4 Kefir. This fermented dairy product is associated with a range of health benefits, such as lowering cholesterol, preventing tumors, increasing the speed of wound healing, and helping relieve allergies and asthma. It also contains probiotics, which help with digestion. Have a glass at breakfast.

5 Lentils. High in protein, fiber, folate and iron, they are also an important source of other essential vitamins and minerals. Tannins found in lentils act as an antioxidant, may reduce blood pressure and cholesterol, and help regulate the immune system. Mix them with grains, such as rice, or make a batch of their namesake soup.



Sources include Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics, California Artichoke Advisory Board, *Frontiers in Microbiology*, *Nutrients*, Produce for Better Health Foundation and USA Dry Pea & Lentil Council.