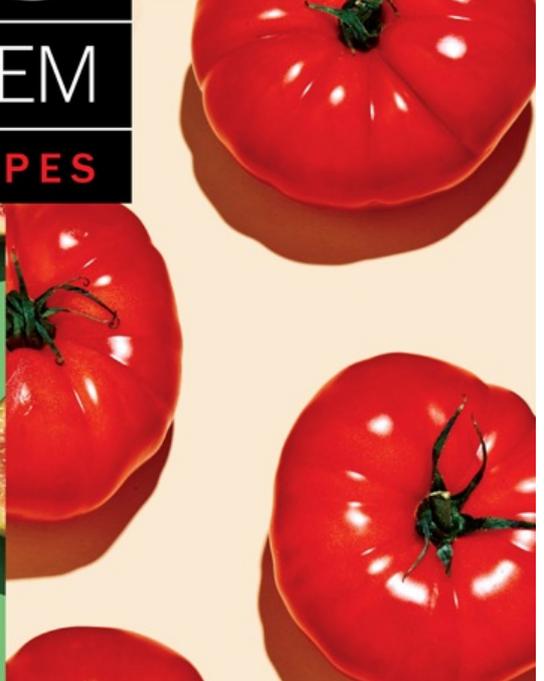
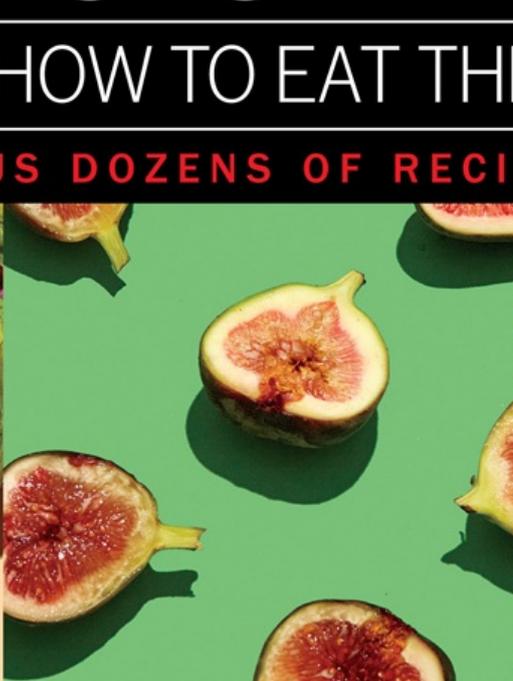
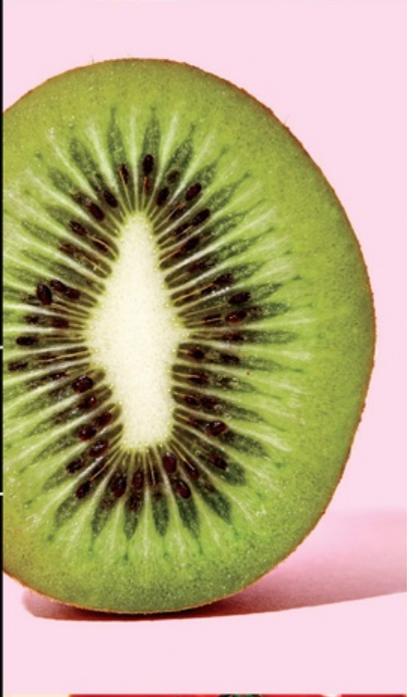




TIME
100
HEALTHIEST
FOODS
& HOW TO EAT THEM
PLUS DOZENS OF RECIPES





100
HEALTHIEST
FOODS
& HOW TO EAT THEM

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It's Time to Mix It Up

By Siobhan O'Connor and Alexandra Sifferlin



THERE'S A BIT OF A FIB BAKED INTO the title of this book. Not that the list you're holding is full of foods like french fries and Double Stuf Oreos. But ranking individual foods according to how healthy they are is more of an art than a science. Still, even if we can't prove that the 100 foods on this list are, without a doubt, healthier than, say, pricey açai berries (which did not make the list, by the way), we can promise that all 100 can improve your diet—and ultimately your health.

But while these foods are all astonishingly nutritious, they aren't especially exotic. They're not the kind of things that make their way from far-flung corners of the jungle onto “superfoods you need to eat right now” lists. They're not the kind of foods exalted for their magical powers, either. Instead, TIME's editors, along with nutrition experts, carefully vetted a very long list of foods. Then we narrowed it down, focusing on foods that are relatively easy to find at the supermarket, that are not overly expensive or trendy and, perhaps most important, that are pleasurable to eat. To that end, we included not just facts about the different foods and why they're nutritional powerhouses but also straightforward descriptions of how our editors and experts like to eat them.

We went with 100 because we wanted to provide you with lots of options—but we also wanted to make the point that there are simply so many wonderful foods out there to choose from. Because while most of us know the basics of how to eat well—you can't go wrong with vegetables; daily burgers are an objectively bad idea—sometimes trying to decide what to eat three times a day, seven days a week can feel like a chore.

Indeed, for many of us, the search for the healthiest way to eat has long been fraught. For one thing, nutritional science is known to induce whiplash. For decades you heard that fat is the ultimate diet saboteur, responsible for nearly everything that can go wrong in the human body. The next thing you know, it's heralded as a critical part of a healthy diet that not only won't make you fat but is good for you and may even play a role in keeping you slender. Then, just as you finally (and with great effort) developed a taste for egg-white omelets, you learned that the yolk isn't just OK—it's the very thing that makes eggs a healthy food choice in the first place.

Making matters more confusing is that nutrition experts are often loath to change their tune when the diet

advice they've been dishing no longer lines up with the latest science. But the new truth is, when it comes to healthy eating, we could all stand to mix it up a little bit, eat a little more of everything but not too much of anything, and, ultimately, fuss a little less about what we eat.

WE COULD ALL STAND TO FUSS A LITTLE LESS ABOUT WHAT WE EAT.

You don't need to take it from just us. Science says so too. In 2014, several nutrition researchers got together to answer an age-old question: What diet is the best for your health? They pulled together robust studies on some of the most popular diets, including Mediterranean, paleo, vegan and low-fat. They concluded that the best way to eat is to simply consume real food. That means there's no diet that trumps another, regardless of what TV commercials and magazine headlines will tell you. Because that's one thing the science is clear on—if you want to improve your diet and your health, you need to eat whole foods as much as you can. Cook them at home whenever you can. And except for the occasional indulgence, you should keep heavily processed and heavily sugared foods out of your shopping basket.

If you eat this way most of the time, those occasional indulgences won't tempt you anymore—or at least not quite as much. Scientists at Tufts University recently found that eating healthier food for six months can recondition the brain to crave healthier options. And other research has shown that when you eat less fat or less salt or, especially, less sugar, you need a whole lot less of it to feel satisfied. Like all good habits, these ones tend to build upon themselves and multiply.

To get you started, we included [more than two dozen recipes](#) from the editors of our sister brand Cooking Light, which always makes nutritious eating feel enjoyable. We also canvassed editors and experts for unfussy cooking suggestions that, we hope, will serve as jumping-off points—rather than to-the-letter instructions—for your own experimenting in the kitchen. That's because eating for pleasure and having fun in the process are so often left out of dietary advice—yet are so central to any healthy habits' lasting for the long haul.

A very strong predictor of whether a diet will be successful is how hungry people feel while they're following it. Feeling deprived all the time isn't a great motivator. So while we're certainly recommending lots of berries and deep-green vegetables in this book, we're by no means trying to persuade you to eat like a rabbit. That's why pork loin, fish, popcorn, high-fat oils and even alcohol make the list.

Eating well shouldn't be complicated, and it shouldn't be stressful. So on your next trip to the supermarket, maybe mix it up a little and try something new from this list. And if you're intimidated by ginger's twisted appendages or don't even know where to start with kohlrabi, don't sweat it. Just grab something else. Maybe grab something you know. Prepare it as simply as you like, in your own kitchen, and then eat. Simple as that.

O'Connor is editorial director for health at TIME. Sifferlin is a health writer for TIME and the author of the 100 food entries.

Almonds



How to eat them

These earthy nuts can be enjoyed in endless ways, from grabbing a handful on the go to adding slices to oatmeal or smoothies.

Why they're good for you

Rich in monounsaturated fats, almonds have been shown to help keep cholesterol levels within a healthy range. They are also effective prebiotics, which means they feed the helpful probiotics in the gut and support a robust immune system. Almonds, like all nuts, are good sources of the antioxidant vitamin E, which may play a role in slowing cognitive decline with age.

Nutrition

Like all nuts, almonds pack protein and fiber, but they also pack fat. Moderation is key when you're snacking on them.

Anchovies



How to eat them

Eat them on toast, or make your own Caesar dressing by chopping up four or five anchovies and mixing them with a bit of olive oil, lemon juice, garlic, parmesan cheese and a dollop of Dijon mustard.

Why they're good for you

These bite-size fish show up in many signature dishes from Italy, Thailand, Spain and Korea. They're high in protein as well as B vitamins, calcium, iron and omega-3 fatty acids. And since they're so low on the food chain, they're also low in mercury.

Nutrition

A serving of just 3 ounces packs nearly 20 grams of protein—that's about a third of most adults' daily needs.

Amaranth



How to eat it

Amaranth can be simmered into a morning porridge or popped on the stove like popcorn for a healthy snack.

Why it's good for you

Though it's often referred to as a grain, amaranth is actually a seed that's rich in fiber and naturally gluten-free, making it appropriate for people with celiac disease. In addition, it's a complete protein and contains cholesterol-lowering fiber.

Nutrition

The (high) protein to (low) fat ratio makes this an especially healthy and filling food.

Apples



How to eat them

Sauté up some kale or any other bitter green with chopped apple and some minced garlic for a simple side dish.

Why they're good for you

“An apple a day” is a cliché for a reason. Apples are rich in a type of fiber that can help lower cholesterol levels, making them a heart-healthy snack. One study even found that eating apples led people to consume 15% fewer calories at their next meal. Another perk? They're helpful for regulating digestion.

Nutrition

Apples are especially high in fiber, which is good for your gut bacteria and how full you feel after you eat.

Artichokes



How to eat them

Roasting artichokes takes some preparation—you have to remove the tough outer leaves, peel the stems, chop off the tops and soak them in lemon water so they don't brown—but the process can be relaxing, and the result is delicious. Serve with a simple dipping sauce of Greek yogurt and curry. Of course, you can also simply buy them frozen, which are just as nutritious and far easier to prep.

Why they're good for you

Artichokes have a meaty texture and are nutritional powerhouses, rich in folate, fiber, vitamin K and antioxidants. When selecting a fresh artichoke, pick one that's heavy and firm.

Nutrition

They're high-fiber and low-calorie, making them a dieter's dream.

Asparagus



How to eat it

Use a peeler to shave raw asparagus spears into little ribbons that can be mixed into salads. You can also try them oven-roasted whole at 375°F for about 12 minutes and then served with sunny-side-up eggs for breakfast. When buying asparagus, avoid spears with smashed tips, which will spoil in the fridge more easily.

Why it's good for you

Asparagus is a good source of folate, which is essential for a wide variety of body functions, as well as vitamins C and K.

Nutrition

The vitamins and nutrients packed into a single spear make them worth the splurge.

Avocados



How to eat them

There's really no bad way to eat an avocado, but it's especially good only lightly adorned. Slice an avocado in half, drizzle with a little olive oil, salt, pepper and chili flakes, and eat with a spoon or mash it onto a couple of slices of toast. You can also blend half of one into a smoothie for a richer consistency.

Why they're good for you

Avocados contain nearly 20 vitamins and minerals, many of which are easily absorbed by the body. Substituting an avocado for a source of saturated fat, such as butter or full-fat cheese, may reduce heart-disease risk.

Nutrition

No surprise, avocados are high in fat. A typical serving is one third to one half a fruit per day.

Bananas



How to eat them

These tropical fruits couldn't be simpler to eat on the fly, but they're also tasty additions to other classics like peanut-butter sandwiches or oatmeal.

Why they're good for you

Bananas are among the most popular fruits on the planet. They're an excellent source of cardioprotective potassium, and they pack a nice amount of filling fiber too. Bananas are an effective prebiotic, enhancing the body's ability to absorb calcium, and they increase dopamine, norepinephrine and serotonin—brain chemicals that counter depression.

Nutrition

The greener the banana, the higher the amount of resistant starch, which makes you feel full longer.

Basil



How to eat it

This herb is actually a member of the mint family and is the star ingredient in pesto. Toss it into a stir-fry, add to pasta or pizza, or shred it into a green salad. Just be sure you wait until just before serving to tear it.

Why it's good for you

The oil extracts from basil leaves contain antioxidant compounds that have been shown to combat inflammation. Also high in vitamins, basil is a simple way to add a touch of nutrition to many recipes, and it pairs well with hearty vegetables.

Nutrition

This tasty herb is extremely high in vitamin K, which can help with blood clotting.

Beet Greens



How to eat them

If you're a waste-conscious eater, save your beet greens! You can chop them up and stir them into soups and salads. Or cook them up with some onion and olive oil for a simple side dish.

Why they're good for you

It's hard to compete with the deep reds of beets, but don't toss out the greens that sprout from them. The leaves of some beets are especially lush and thick, and they're high in vitamins A and K. What's more, one cup boasts whopping 44 milligrams of calcium.

Nutrition

Like all leafy greens, they're a good vegetarian source of iron.

Beets



How to eat them

They're delicious roasted, but it's easy to forget that beets can be enjoyed raw too. Slice them up super-thin and serve with a little salad dressing as a snack.

Why they're good for you

Research shows that beets are a good source of antioxidants and have compounds that can help lower blood pressure and LDL cholesterol. They also look lovely on your plate thanks to betalains, the pigment that gives them their color. Betalains are destroyed by heat, so steam beets for 15 minutes or roast them for less than an hour.

Nutrition

Consider beets' bright red hue a sign from nature that says "eat me." They are packed with hard-to-get nutrients.

Blackberries



How to eat them

Bring two cups of steel-cut oats, a pinch of salt and eight cups of water to a boil. Then turn off the heat, leave it overnight, and top it with blackberries the next day.

Why they're good for you

All berries are nutritious, but these are particularly high in fiber, which can increase how full and satisfied you feel after eating, as well as vitamins C and K and manganese. Research has also linked the compounds that make their colors so vibrant with the ability to lower inflammation and support the immune system.

Nutrition

Blackberries are low in sugar compared with other fruit. A cup contains just 7 grams.

Blueberries



How to eat them

Take a small jar or Tupperware container and fill the bottom with Greek yogurt. Add a thin layer of granola, followed by lots of blueberries. Drizzle a little honey on top, and let the mini parfait sit in your fridge overnight. Grab it and go in the morning.

Why they're good for you

Blueberries are rich in a natural plant chemical called anthocyanin that gives these berries their namesake color. Blueberries may help protect vision, lower blood sugar levels, and keep the mind sharp by improving memory and cognition.

Nutrition

Be sure to wash your berries well. They're packed with nutrients, but they can also contain high levels of pesticide residues.

Broccoli Sprouts



How to eat them

You can add broccoli sprouts to sandwiches or stir-fry dishes. If your usual salads are getting boring, sprinkle in a handful of broccoli sprouts before serving.

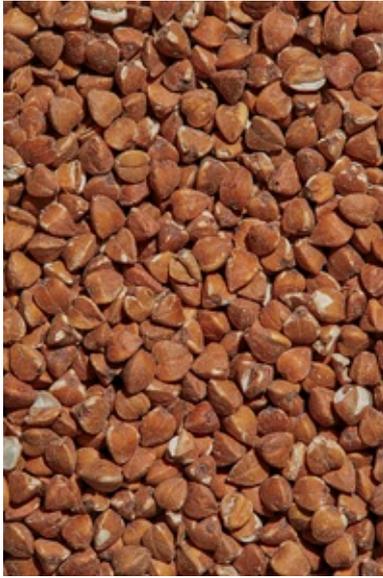
Why they're good for you

Our skin, lungs, kidneys and liver are constantly detoxifying, but it's nice to lend a helping hand. Eating broccoli sprouts, which look similar to alfalfa, may help with just that. Rich in natural plant chemicals, broccoli sprouts may have cancer-fighting and antioxidant properties that help our cells protect us from disease.

Nutrition

These sprouts contain many of the same nutrients as whole broccoli, though in smaller amounts.

Buckwheat



How to eat it

Despite its name, buckwheat is actually wheat- and gluten-free. It can be used as the base for a dish in lieu of rice, in soups or in breakfast foods like pancakes or waffles.

Why it's good for you

This whole grain, which is used to make soba noodles, is rich in fiber and is a complete protein.

Nutrition

One cup is low in fat and packs 23 grams of protein.

Canned Salmon



How to eat it

Canned salmon contains tiny bones, which you'll definitely want to eat—they're a great source of calcium that our bodies can more easily absorb than plant sources of the nutrient. Try making your own salmon burgers with eggs, spices and lemon zest.

Why it's good for you

Less expensive than fresh wild salmon, the canned version is one of the richest food sources of vitamin D, which is good for bone health and calcium absorption. Its omega-3 fatty acids are another bonus.

Nutrition

One whole 170-gram can of wild salmon contains up to 60 grams of protein.

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