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Our January 2018 Newsletter for Healthy Living

Your Health - A New Year's Investment

Investing in your health requires spending the majority of your food budget on REAL foods, and only a small amount on processed foods. To help with your New Year's resolve to improve your diet, we've assembled a team of 20 foods known for their potent health benefits. Our top picks are foods that nourish your brain, heart, gut, muscles, immune system and more.

Topping the list of brain-boosting superfoods are foods high in healthy fats. This is not surprising considering your brain is mainly made up of fats. **1. Avocados** are a great source of healthy oleic acid (monounsaturated fat, also found in olive oil), which helps decrease inflammation. Avocados have



also been shown to effectively combat nearly every aspect of metabolic syndrome, a risk factor of dementia and most other chronic disease. Avocados also

provide nearly 20 essential nutrients, including potassium, which helps balance your vitally important potassium to sodium ratio. **2. Organic coconut oil** Besides being excellent for your thyroid and your metabolism, its medium-chain fatty acids (MCTs) are a source of ketone bodies, which act as an alternate source of brain fuel that can help prevent the brain atrophy associated with dementia. MCTs also impart a number of health benefits, including raising your body's metabolism and fighting off pathogens.

3. Grass fed butter. About 20 percent of butterfat consists of short- and medium-chain fatty acids, which are used right away for quick energy and therefore don't contribute to fat levels in your blood. Therefore, a significant portion of the butter you consume is used immediately for energy, similar to a carbohydrate. **4. Organic pastured eggs.** Many of the healthiest foods are rich in chole-

sterol and saturated fats, and eggs are no exception. Cholesterol is needed for the regulation of protein pathways involved in cell signaling and other cellular processes. It's particularly important for your brain, which contains about 25 percent of the cholesterol in your body.

“Research shows raw beet juice can lower blood pressure by an average of four to five points.”

5. Wild-caught Alaskan salmon and other small, fatty fish, such as sardines and anchovies, are high in omega-3 fats necessary for optimal brain (and heart) health. Research also suggests eating oily fish once or twice a week may increase your life span. **6. Organic raw nuts such as macadamia and pecans.** Macadamia nuts have the highest fat and lowest protein and carb content of any nut, and about 60 percent of the fat is the monounsaturated fat oleic acid. A single serving of macadamia nuts also provides 58 percent of the R.D.A. in manganese and 23 percent of thiamine. Pecans are a close second to macadamia nuts on the fat and protein scale, and they also contain anti-inflammatory magnesium, heart

content. Your body transforms nitrates into nitric oxide, which enhances oxygenation and blood flow and has a beneficial impact on your circulatory and immune systems. Research shows raw beet juice can lower blood pressure by an average of four to five points in just a few hours. Fermented beets (kvass) are lower in sugar content and are a great source of healthy probiotics.

8. Arugula, a relative of the cruciferous family of vegetables, contains flavonoids known to help improve blood vessel function, increase blood flow, lower blood pressure and lower inflammation. With a tangy, slightly peppery kick, arugula is a tasty addition to just about any meal. **9. Sprouts, microgreens and baby greens** Harvesting greens before they reach maturity results in nutrient-dense plant foods that allow you to eat less in volume and dramatically improve your nutrition. According to research by the U.S. Department of Agriculture

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Beauty from the Inside Out

Nearly 13,000 chemicals are used in cosmetics and personal care products, but only 10 percent have been tested for human safety. The average American woman uses 12 personal care products or cosmetics every day that contain approximately 168 different chemicals. While men use fewer products and are exposed to nearly half the

study showed a clear association between the time of menopause and the risk of heart disease. Women who entered menopause early had an increased risk of heart disease and premature death, while women who entered menopause between the ages of 50 and 54 had a lower risk of fatal heart disease — even lower than women under 50.

“The FDA places the responsibility of ensuring the safety of personal care products on the manufacturer.”

number of chemicals than women, teens use more products and are exposed to even more chemicals.

Your personal care products are applied on an active, living and complex organ system. Your skin is not just a covering for your body, but rather provides temperature regulation, protection, and can produce vitamin D when exposed to the sun. The nerve cells that are packed over the expanse of your body act as messengers to your brain and are a crucial part of your ability to interact with the world. Your skin may also be used to deliver medications as whatever you put on your skin can be absorbed. For instance, nicotine patches or pain medication patches deliver drugs directly into your bloodstream as they pass through your skin. The same may happen with the personal care products you use. If the molecules are small enough to be absorbed, they migrate through the skin and directly into your blood. Since your skin absorbs chemicals from your personal care products directly into your bloodstream, it's particularly important to reduce exposure.

Women with higher levels of chemicals detected in their blood or urine are at higher risk for experiencing menopause two to four years earlier than women who have lower levels of chemicals in their body. The long-term health problems associated with early menopause, regardless of the cause, include an increased risk for cardiovascular disease, neurologic disease, psychiatric disease, osteoporosis and death. A meta-analysis of 32 studies, including over 300,000 women, reached a similar conclusion. Overall the group of women who entered menopause at 45 or earlier suffered a 50 percent greater risk of heart disease.

The age-related findings in the

The study identified 15 chemicals associated with early menopause and declining ovarian function. The researchers identified 15 chemicals - nine PCBs, three pesticides, two phthalates and a furan (a toxic chemical) - that warrant closer evaluation. Many of those have already been linked to other health risks, such as cancer, early puberty and metabolic syndrome. For instance, phthalates, a plastic chemical commonly found in personal care products including lotions, perfumes and hairspray, has been linked in studies to asthma, attention deficit disorder, breast cancer, obesity and a reduction in your child's cognitive ability, to name just a few damaging health conditions. And phthalates are just one class of chemicals found in moisturizers and lotions that have allergic potential. Other chemicals frequently found include parabens, toluene, sodium lauryl sulfate and formaldehyde releasers, all of which have their own unique list of adverse health effects.

Deceptive labeling on personal care products is likely the result of a lack of federal regulation by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA). Unless the product contains a currently banned chemical, all cosmetics and personal care products are allowed on the market without prior approval from any governmental agency. The FDA places the responsibility of ensuring the safety of personal care products squarely on the shoulders of the manufacturer, which is a clear conflict of interest. Product ingredients are protected from disclosure by the FDA as it falls under proprietary information. The argument is the industry is highly competitive, and if an adversarial company were to be able to recreate a popular product, it could significantly impact the profitability of the first company. The intent of the law was

to protect the viability of a manufacturer while depending on the company to protect the health of the nation.

Sooo, take the onus of responsibility yourself, and be certain that you read the ingredient statements and ask questions. Your healthiest choice is to protect your skin from the inside out. Your skin reacts to variables both inside and outside your body. For instance, if you work outside during the winter months, or are in health care and wash your hands frequently throughout the day, your skin may become dry and cracked. Exposure to these factors reduces the natural oils on your skin that protect against drying and cracking. Internal factors that affect the ability to stay supple and soft is whether your diet supplies the necessary nutrients.

One nutrient is essential omega-3 fats, as your body cannot manufacture them independently. A deficiency may present as cracked heels, thick patches of skin or eczema. These fats also have an anti-inflammatory effect and help soothe your complexion. If you've incorporated wild-caught Alaskan salmon, sardines and herring in your diet but are still suffering from dry skin, an omega-3 supplement, such as krill oil, may be highly beneficial.



Pure, virgin coconut oil is another all-natural moisturizer you can use topically on your skin. When absorbed, it helps to reduce the appearance of fine lines and wrinkles by keeping your connective tissue strong and supple. Perhaps the most important step you can take to improve the health of your skin is to reduce sugars and processed foods. If you eliminate sugars for just a few weeks you'll likely notice a rapid improvement in your complexion and condition of your skin. Your overall health and the quality of your skin is strongly associated with the health of your gut. Promoting the growth of beneficial gut bacteria and the health of your gut microbiome may help fight against skin irritations and chronic skin conditions. If you don't regularly eat fermented foods, then a high-quality probiotic supplement can be very beneficial.

Reference: *PLOS One* 2015; 10(1):e116057. WebMD. *Early Menopause Tied to Heart Disease, Death Risk. Science Daily*, January 28, 2015. *The Guardian* December 10, 2014. U.S. Food and Drug Administration Cosmetic Basics. U.S. Food and Drug Administration Are Cosmetics Approved by FDA.

in which 25 different microgreens were evaluated, all were found to have higher nutritional densities than their full-grown counterparts, including 10 times higher amounts of valuable antioxidant compounds.

“...ginger may protect against a range of chronic diseases...due to its beneficial effects on oxidative stress and inflammation.”

Mounting evidence reveals there's more to nutrition than previously thought — a large component of it actually revolves around nourishing the health-promoting bacteria in your body, thereby keeping harmful microbes in check. One of the reasons a healthy diet is able to influence your health is because it helps create an optimal environment for beneficial bacteria in your gut, while decreasing pathogenic or disease-causing bacteria, fungi and yeast. Your top teammates in this category are: **10. Grass-fed kefir.** This cultured milk product, which is loaded with probiotics, also contains fiber, which is another important source of nourishment for the healthy bacteria in your gut. **11. Fermented vegetables.** One of the best and least expensive ways to optimize your gut microbiome is to eliminate sugars and processed sugars and eat traditionally fermented foods. Kefir is one; fermented vegetables are another. You can easily ferment just about any vegetable you like – and they're a great source of vitamin K2. **12. Organic bone broth.** Bone broth is one of the oldest meals on record, and it may also be one of the most healing. It is very easily digested, and contains profound immune-boosters including bioavailable minerals, collagen, silicon, components of bone and bone marrow, glucosamine and chondroitin sulfate and the conditionally essential amino acids proline, glycine and glutamine. Bone broth is best made at home from scratch, using organic grass fed bones. **13. Organic psyllium** is a dietary fiber that helps nourish healthy bacteria in your gut, reduces intestinal inflammation, and may provide some relief from irritable bowel syndrome.

While several of the foods already listed could belong in this section, two potent anti-inflammatory spices worthy of special mention are: **14. Turmeric.** Nicknamed the "spice of life," its bioactive compound, curcumin, has been found to help maintain a healthy diges-

tive system, modulate some 700 genes, positively control more than 160 different physiological pathways, improve the orderliness of cell membranes, and directly interact with inflammatory molecules to help lower inflammation.

15. Ginger is also well-known for its medicinal qualities. The Annals of the New York Academy of Sciences recently published a review showing ginger may protect against a wide range of chronic diseases, in part due to its beneficial effects on oxidative stress and inflammation. Your immune system is the first-line defense against all disease, and a majority of your immune function resides or starts in your gut. Hence, all the gut-healthy foods already mentioned will help boost your immune function.

In addition to those, the following two categories are worthy of special note: **16. Allium vegetables — garlic and onions.** The unique scent emitted by allium vegetables when cut comes from sulfur-containing compounds such as allicin, which have many health-promoting effects. Studies have demonstrated garlic may inhibit a vast array of diseases by reducing inflammation, boosting immune function and improving cardiovascular health. Onions also have a wealth of beneficial properties, and are especially rich in quercetin, a powerful antioxidant with antihistamine and anti-inflammatory properties that may help fight chronic diseases like allergies, heart disease and cancer.

17. Mushrooms. Aside from being rich in protein, fiber, vitamins B and C, calcium and minerals, mushrooms are excellent sources of antioxidants, including antioxidants that are unique to mushrooms, such as ergothioneine, recognized as a "master antioxidant." A study in the journal *Nature* discussed the importance of ergothioneine, which appears to have a very specific role in protecting DNA from oxidative damage.

Proteins are found in every cell in your body. These chains of amino acids are important for repair, maintenance and growth of cells, and are essential for healthy muscles, organs, glands and skin. As protein is broken down and used up in your body, you must replace it by consuming protein via your diet.

When it comes to protein-rich, muscle-boosting foods, quality matters. Two of the top contenders here are: **18. Grass-fed beef.** Compared to conventional beef, grass-fed beef tends to have significantly better omega-6 to omega-3 ratios, higher concentrations of conjugated linoleic acid (CLA) and antioxidants, and a lower risk of being contaminated with antibiotic-resistant bacteria.

Michigan Grass-fed Beef:
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19. Whey protein, a byproduct of milk and cheese (often referred to as the gold standard of protein), was promoted for its health benefits by Hippocrates as early as 420 B.C. Besides providing all of the essential amino acids your body needs, high-quality whey protein from organically-raised, grass-fed cows also contains three ingredients of particular importance for health: leucine, glutathione and CLA. Both leucine and CLA can be helpful if you're trying to lose weight, while glutathione boosts your overall health by protecting your cells and mitochondria from oxidative damage.

Last, but not the least, of our healthy foods teammates is **20. Broccoli (and other cruciferous vegetables).** Thanks to plant compounds such as sulforaphane and glucoraphanin, three servings of broccoli per week may reduce your risk of certain cancers by more than 60 percent. It's also an anti-inflammatory and encourages production of enzymes capable of reducing reactive oxygen species by as much as 73 percent. And the best news is – like all of these healthy teammates – it tastes great!

Reference: *Nutrition Journal* December 2012; 11:106. *Journal of Agriculture and Food Chemistry* August 8, 2012; 60(31): 7644-51. *Annals of the New York Academy of Sciences* May 15, 2017. The Vegetarian Site: All About Allium Vegetables. *Nature* 2010; 17:



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Miller Amish Pick of the Chick.....	\$1.99/lb
Fjord Sea Trout Fillets, Norway, farm-raised.....	\$14.99/lb
Michigan Grass-fed T-Bone Steaks & Porterhs	\$13.99/lb
Organic Broccoli.....	\$1.99/lb
Organic Russet Potatoes, 5-lb. bag.....	\$3.99

Effective January 1 through January 28, 2018

Napa Valley Naturals Avocado Oil, 25.4 oz.....	\$9.99
Kevita Kombucha, assorted 15.2 oz.....	2/\$6
Cadia Organic Beans, asstd 15-16 oz.....	3/\$4
Simple Mills Almond Crackers, asstd 4.25 oz.....	\$3.99
Maple Hill Organic Yogurt, asstd 6 oz.....	4/\$5
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