

THE VEGGIES MEN NEED

This supermarket list will help you fight disease and boost general wellness.

MEN NEED THREE ONE-CUP SERVINGS OF VEGETABLES every day to stay healthy, according to the Centers for Disease Control. But most guys manage just half that amount. With summer here and vegetables in abundance,

now's the perfect time to develop the right habits. The five veggies below have special blends of nutrients that help you avoid certain health hazards and keep you fit better than others. —JAMIE BECKMAN

BROCCOLI SPROUTS

Best For: Respiratory Health

Broccoli is great for your health, but the prepubescent version is even better. Broccoli sprouts contain high levels of sulforaphane, a compound that increases production of antioxidant enzymes in airways, a UCLA study found. Those enzymes help prevent inflammation, which leads to diseases like asthma. Sulforaphane might also reduce the risk of ulcers, posits a Japanese study.



SQUASH

Best For: Keeping Your Eyesight

Much-heralded carrots are okay, but yellow squash contains three key plant pigments that promote good vision. Lutein and xanthine scavenge the free radicals (unstable molecules born from pollution and stress, which can damage cells) that cause eye diseases such as cataracts, and beta-carotene (which converts to vitamin A, stored in the eye) is key for night vision.



TOMATOES

Best For: Staving Off Prostate Cancer

Yeah, we know, they're actually a fruit, but they make the list because they taste good with a little salt on them, and you just can't say that about other fruits. What makes them so healthy is that they contain lycopene, which helps neutralize disease-causing free radicals in our bodies. The prostate happens to concentrate lycopene, and researchers think that helps protect against cancer. Further studies suggest that guys who eat tomatoes regularly have less aggressive prostate cancer.

Hate veggies? Here are two tasty ways to get your fix.

Dump a cup of frozen vegetables in a bowl, cover them with pasta sauce and a little oregano, and zap it all in the microwave. "Frozen veggies are better for you than fresh ones," says Dr. David Heber, director of the UCLA Center for Human Nutrition, "because the nutrients are frozen in right when they're picked."

Try Field Roast products such as sausage and deli slices, which are made from grains and vegetables. They taste remarkably like meat and are chock-full of protein (fieldroast.com).



FOR RECIPES, GO TO
MENSJOURNAL.COM/VEGGIES.

ROMAINE LETTUCE

Best For: Workout Recovery

"Dark-colored vegetables like romaine lettuce or spinach have a plethora of vitamins and minerals that improve electrolyte balance and speed recovery," says Jeff Kotterman, director of the National Association of Sports Nutrition. Antioxidants in these foods block damaging effects of free radicals formed when tiny blood cells are crushed during workouts, and their electrolytes reduce cardiovascular stress. Grab a salad or hit the juice bar within a half hour for best results.

CHARD

Best For: Preventing Heart Disease

Guys who eat eight servings of veggies a day enjoy a 30 percent lower chance of having a heart attack than those who barely touch the stuff, says Lilian Cheung, lecturer in nutrition at the Harvard School of Public Health. In particular, green leafy vegetables like chard and spinach have a protective effect on the heart, Cheung says. One theory: Nitrite — which in small amounts has been shown to safeguard the heart and aid blood flow — is prevalent in greens.

