

TIPS



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FOODS TO BOOST MALE HEALTH

How do the Pittsburgh Steelers soothe sore muscles? **Cherry juice**. They keep it in their training room at all times. The pigment in cherries and cherry juice mimics the effects of some anti-inflammatory medicines, says Dr. Leslie Bonci, MPH, RD, nutritional consultant to the Pittsburgh Steelers. And there are no side effects.

Fatty fish, like salmon or halibut, are an excellent source of healthy fat. They contain omega-3 fatty acids, which protect against heart disease, some cancers and arthritis. Studies suggest two servings of fatty fish per week can lower your chances of dying from heart disease.

The whey in **milk and yogurt** is a source of leucine, the muscle-building amino acid. It's packed with protein, potassium and friendly bacteria that keep the gut healthy.

The **banana** is celebrated for its bounty of potassium, which is critically important in muscle contractions and bone health. It also helps blood pressure. In fact, getting enough potassium may be as important as reducing sodium when it comes to lowering blood pressure.

Nuts provide protein, fiber and zinc while satisfying the urge for a crunchy, salty snack. Pistachios stand out because they're higher in plant sterols that can improve cholesterol levels.

Tomatoes are rich in lycopene, a potent antioxidant that may protect against some cancers. Some research suggests that men who eat tomato sauce regularly are less likely to get prostate cancer.

According to a study of more than 40 nations, the food that may offer the strongest protection against prostate cancer is **soy**. This includes tofu, miso soup and soy milk. In Asian countries, people eat up to 90 times more soy foods than Americans and prostate cancer is far less common in those countries.

Vegetables are packed with phytochemicals, plant-based nutrients that boost cell health and protect against cancer. There are many different types of phytochemicals and the best way to get a variety of them is to eat different colored veggies. There should be color on your plate at every meal.

Spinach, collard greens and kale can benefit the eyes as well as the prostate. These leafy green vegetables are rich in lutein and zeaxanthin. Both nutrients protect against cataracts and age-related macular degeneration – two diseases that can cause blindness.

Berries can help you be on top of your game mentally as well as physically. They're loaded with antioxidants that may reduce the risk of various types of cancer. Studies suggest blueberries can also enhance memory and brain function.

When making changes to your diet, add good foods rather than denying yourself bad ones. As you get used to eating more fruits, vegetables, lean meats and whole grains, these foods may come to replace some of the less healthy choices. **You'll play better today and stay in the game longer!**