

## **Eating the Rainbow for Good Nutrition The Vitamins and Minerals of the Color Wheel**

The nutrients in fruits and vegetables can often be categorized by their colors. Here are the vitamins and minerals you can expect to find in each:

**Red** In fruits and vegetables, red is usually a sign of vitamin A (beta carotene) and vitamin C. Typically; red produce is also high in manganese and fiber. Choose red bell peppers, tomatoes, cherries, cranberries, raspberries, rhubarb, pomegranates, and beets. Red apples also contain quercetin, a compound that seems to fight colds, the flu, and allergies. Tomatoes, watermelon, and red grapefruit are loaded with lycopene, a compound that appears to have cancer-fighting properties.

**Orange** Just a shade away from red, orange in fruits and vegetables signifies a similar vitamin and mineral profile. You'll get vitamins C, A, and B6, potassium, and fiber in choices such as butternut squash, carrots, sweet potatoes, cantaloupes, oranges, pumpkins, orange peppers, nectarines, and peaches.

**Yellow** Banana is probably the first yellow fruit that comes to mind - and it delivers potassium and fiber. You will also find potassium and fiber plus manganese, vitamin A, and magnesium in other yellow produce, such as spaghetti squash, summer squash, and yellow bell peppers.

**Green** Dark leafy greens are packed with nutrients, and you should add a variety to your diet - this group offers far more vitamins and minerals than iceberg lettuce. One of the best dark leafy green is spinach because of its rich lutein content, which aids eyesight, and folate, which supports cell reproduction. Broccoli and asparagus also contain these compounds.

**Blue** Think blue, and you're most likely picturing a bowl of blueberries, one of nature's most powerful antioxidants. They are also loaded with fiber and make an incredibly versatile addition to your diet - eat them by the handful, sprinkle them on cereal, or add them to salads for a different and delicious taste.

**Purple** This group includes vegetables like red onions and eggplant, and fruits such as blackberries, Concord grapes, currants, and plums. Purple indicates the presence of anthocyanins, powerful antioxidants that protect blood vessels and preserve healthy skin. You can also find vitamin A and flavonoids in purple vegetables like radicchio, purple cabbage, purple potatoes, and purple carrots.

**White** White may not be much of a color, but white vegetables, such as cauliflower, rutabagas, and parsnips, still shine with vitamins and minerals like vitamins C, K, and folate, and they contain fiber. Don't forget onions and garlic, which have a compound called allicin that seems to protect the heart and blood vessels from damage.

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