



From the Research: Five Reasons Why Grapes Are Good for You

Grapes of all colors – red, green and black – are a natural source of beneficial components called polyphenols, which can also act as antioxidants. Grapes are a heart-healthy food that can play a role in healthy aging, and research suggests positive links between consumption of grapes and eye health, brain health, bone and joint health, cell health and more – all in addition to grapes' well-established support of heart health.

Our website (grapesfromcalifornia.com) provides more information on the research into grapes and health for you to peruse at your leisure. In the meantime, here are five great reasons to add grapes to your day:

1. **Grapes Deliver Antioxidants and Other Polyphenols.** Grapes of all colors contain a variety of antioxidants and other polyphenols. Antioxidants neutralize harmful free radicals to help prevent the process of oxidation that damages cells. Sounds pretty technical, but in fact, neutralizing free radicals happens naturally when we eat foods like grapes that promote antioxidant activity. When free radicals are left to their own devices, a condition called "oxidative stress" occurs. Oxidative stress is now associated with numerous health conditions and chronic illnesses.
2. **Love Your Heart: Eat Grapes.** Human studies have shown that eating a variety of grapes may help support a healthy heart by promoting relaxation of blood vessels to help maintain healthy blood flow and function. Heart-healthy grapes may also help promote healthy aging: studies looking into the health benefits derived from eating normal portions of grapes on a regular basis are underway at some of the nation's most prestigious research institutions.
3. **"Grape" News for High Blood Pressure.** In a recent series of laboratory studies¹²³, rats were fed a salty diet and their blood pressures rose as a result. When grapes were added to their diet blood pressure levels dropped, heart function improved and inflammation was reduced throughout their bodies. These animals also showed fewer signs of heart damage compared to those who did not receive grapes in the diet.
4. **A Boost for Colon Health.** In a small human study of colon cancer patients⁴, those consuming a grape-enriched diet (equal to adding 2 1/2 cups of grapes per day for two weeks) were able to inhibit certain genes that promote tumor growth in the colon. This benefit was observed in the healthy tissue of the subjects' colons, not the cancerous, indicating a potential role for grapes in helping to maintain a healthy colon.
5. **All Eyes Are On Grapes.** Two recent laboratory studies^{5 6} suggest that regular grape consumption may play a role in eye health by protecting the retina from deterioration. In the first study, adding grapes to the diet early in life prevented blindness in animals that were prone to developing retinal damage in old age, similar to age-related macular degeneration in humans. When compared to lutein, grapes offered significantly more protection. In the second study the grape-enriched diet offered protection in multiple ways, from countering oxidative stress to lowering levels of inflammatory proteins and increasing protective proteins in the retina.

¹ Seymour EM, et al. Diet-relevant phytochemical intake affects the cardiac AhR and nrf2 transcriptome and reduces heart failure in hypertensive rats. *Journal Nutritional Biochemistry* 24 (2013) 1580-1586.

² Seymour EM, et al. Chronic intake of phytochemical-enriched diet reduced cardiac fibrosis and diastolic dysfunction caused by prolonged salt-sensitive hypertension. *J Gerontol Biol Sci.* 2008, vol. 63A, No. 10; 1034-1042.

³ Seymour EM, et al. Whole grape intake impacts cardiac peroxisome proliferator-activated receptor and nuclear factor kB-activity and cytokine expression in rats with diastolic dysfunction. *Hypertension.* May 2010, Vol. 55, No.5.

⁴ Nguyen AV, et al. Results of a phase 1 pilot clinical trial examining the effect of plant-derived resveratrol and grape powder on Wnt pathway target gene expression in colonic mucosa and colon cancer. *Cancer Manag Res.* 2009:1-9.

⁵ Yu CC, Nandrot EF, Dun Y, Finnemann SC. Dietary antioxidants prevent age-related retinal pigment epithelium actin damage and blindness in mice lacking alpha5 integrin. *Free Radic Biol Med* 2011; 52:660-70.

⁶ Patel AK, Davis A, Rodriguez ME, Agron S and Hackam, AS. Protective effects of a grape-supplemented diet in a mouse model of retinal degeneration. *Nutrition* 32 (2016) 384-390.