

What Benefits do Antioxidants Have on My Body?

Eating the fruits and vegetables that naturally contain antioxidants is the best way to get them into your system. Mixing them into a well-balanced and healthy diet is the best method of all. This way you reap the benefits of all of the antioxidants in a natural combination. The benefit of dietary antioxidants is that they slow the chemical process of oxidation. This oxidation is what causes narrowing of the arteries and heart-related health problems due to cholesterol deposits. Eating a regular variety of herbs, vegetables and fruits that contain antioxidants is the best way to maintain good health. Some foods that contain antioxidants include: * Tomatoes * Garlic * Onions * Rosemary * Grapes * Pomegranates Antioxidant supplements are available, lab testing have shown that they are just as effective as their natural counterparts. Natural foods contain ranges of antioxidants that work together synergistically. These combinations of antioxidants are much more effective. More Benefits: Antioxidants and other nutrients are needed by the body to protect against cell damage. They also may reduce the risks of certain forms of cancer. It has been discovered that the mitochondria (cell power plants) are a major source of oxidant production. They are also a target for the damaging effects of the very oxidants that they produce. This is a major cause in the advancement of cellular aging, called apoptosis. It is believed that in apoptosis, each cell has a fixed number of cell divisions that it is capable of. After the cell has used its allotted number of divisions, it ceases to function. Oxidative damage is also a contributing factor of DNA mutation, which causes further malfunction of the cells. Most Common Antioxidants: The following is a list of the most common antioxidants, what benefits they offer and where to find them: *Beta-carotene keeps the skin healthy and promotes growth and development of bones. It also helps to prevent night blindness and fight infection. Beta-carotene is found in vegetables and fruits: carrots, cantaloupe, apricots, broccoli, peppers, tomatoes, spinach, sweet potatoes and pumpkin. * Vitamin C destroys free radicals inside and outside cells. It helps in the healing of wounds, preventing bruising, formation of connective tissue, iron absorption and keeping gums healthy. Vitamin C is being studied for its beneficial effects in reducing cataracts, cancer and heart disease. Foods high in vitamin C include tomatoes, citrus fruits and juices, berries, mango, papaya, peppers, cabbage, spinach, broccoli and potatoes. * Vitamin E acts as the essential fat protector in cell membranes and red blood cells. It reduces the risk of heart disease, cancer and other diseases associated with age. Vitamin E is found in peanut butter, nuts, seeds, vegetable oils, margarine, whole grains, wheat germ, salad dressings and avocado. * Selenium helps the body maintain healthy hair and nails. It also enhances immunity and, along with Vitamin E, prevents cell damage. Vitamin E reduces the risk of cancers, especially prostate, lung and colorectal. The best sources of Selenium include brazil nuts, garlic, meat, eggs, poultry, seeds, seafood and whole grains. The amount of selenium found in plants depends on the soil content in which they are grown. Antioxidants benefit the body by providing a layer of protection for the tissues and cells. They are the front line of the body's protection against free radicals. Free radicals are unstable by-products of oxygen that cause premature aging and degenerative diseases. They also come from environmental sources, such as pollution, UV rays and other toxins. Foods rich in antioxidants help to clean free radicals from the body. They also help to prevent various age-related diseases, cancers and heart disease. Maintaining a healthy, nutritionally balanced body that has the ability to fight disease and infection is a prime way to live a long, disease free and happy life. Regular ingestion of antioxidant rich foods or supplements is the best method to achieve this.

About the Author

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