

Berries Offer Health Benefits!

Nutrients found in berries may reduce the risk of heart disease, protect against cancer and more!

It's summertime and fresh berries are in season! Well, indulge yourself. Not only are berries a delicious, colorful, low-fat and high fiber snack, but research continues to demonstrate increasing health benefits in these round little powerhouses.

Blueberries, in particular, have been gaining attention because of their high levels of antioxidants. Antioxidants help counter free radical damage that occurs in the body due to exposure to environmental factors like pollution and the sun's UV rays, and lifestyle factors like smoking, high intensity exercise and other normal metabolic functions.

Recently, the USDA's Agricultural Research Service scientists revealed that berries like blueberries, cranberries, huckleberries and related plants contain resveratrol, a potential anticancer agent. Resveratrol, (a *phytochemical* or plant nutrient), has been most commonly studied in relation to its content in wine – found in the grapes – but evidence shows that there are high levels in berries, as well. Resveratrol has been shown to help protect from fungal diseases, reduce the risk of heart disease and may be protective against cancer.

One cup of berries contains only 75-80 calories, 4-8 grams of fiber and less than 1 gram of fat. In addition, they are high in health-promoting phytochemicals. Researchers are continuing to investigate and discover the good nutrition found in berries.

So, while you're waiting to hear the final word from science on their health benefits, sit down and enjoy a fresh bowl of berries, a berry smoothie, or try the super simple, [Super Berry Bread Pudding](#) recipe on our website.

References:

Internet site - <http://www.ars.usda.gov>. (Accessed February 28, 2001).

King, A. (1999). Characteristics and occurrence of phenolic phytochemicals. *Journal of the American Dietetic Association* 99: 213-218.