



## NUTRITIOUS BANG FOR YOUR CALORIC BUCK

Everyday, we make decisions about what to eat, whether at home or on the go. Making wise decisions about our diet is one significant way to invest in our long-term health. Nutrient density is a term used to describe how many nutrients we get from a food, given the number of calories it contains. In other words, it means getting a nutritious bang for your caloric buck! This includes getting more vitamins and minerals, more fibre, less saturated and trans fats, and more phytochemicals with fewer calories from the foods we eat. How do you know which foods have a higher nutrient density? Here are some general rules to follow:

- Choose whole foods (fresh, frozen, or canned). In general, the more heavily processed a food is, the less “nutrient dense” it becomes (e.g. deep fried vs. grilled).
- Think of nutrient density as a continuum. For example: whole grain bread is more nutritious than white bread, which is more nutritious than sugared doughnuts; or, corn on the cob is more nutritious than canned creamed corn, which is more nutritious than movie-style buttered popcorn.
- Seek out processed foods in which the processing has either improved the food nutritionally (e.g. skim or 1% milk vs. whole) or maintained the nutritional quality (e.g. frozen vegetables vs. fresh vegetables).
- Choose dark-coloured vegetables and fruit more often (e.g. spinach vs. ice burg lettuce).

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## SUPER FOODS YOU SHOULD EAT

These 10 foods or ingredients were identified by the Center for Science in the Public Interest as super foods because they are super nutrient dense! In addition to promoting good health for you and your children, these foods can help reduce your risk for heart disease, Type 2 diabetes, and some forms of cancer. Remember, not all calories are created equal when it comes to nutrition. Include these nutrient-dense foods in your diet more often for a “better health return” on your investment:

1. Oranges - Great-tasting and rich in vitamin C, folic acid, and fibre.
2. Whole-grain bread - High in dietary fibre and lots of other vitamins and minerals. Choose whole-grain breads over enriched white bread more often.
3. Cantaloupe or winter squash (e.g. butternut, acorn) - Loaded with beta-carotene (an important anti-oxidant) and vitamin C.
4. Broccoli - Chock-full of vitamin C, carotenoids, and folic acid.
5. Sweet potatoes - A nutritional All-Star - one of the most nutritious vegetables you can eat. They're loaded with carotenoids, vitamin C, potassium, and fibre.
6. Tomatoes or watermelon - Both offer lots of vitamin C and carotenoids (such as lycopene), and they taste great.
7. Beans and legumes - These nutrition nuggets are inexpensive, low in fat, and rich in protein, iron, folic acid, and fiber. Choose garbanzo (chick peas), pinto, black, navy, kidney, or lentils.
8. Salmon or other fatty fish (e.g. sardines, trout) - High in omega-3 fats, a healthy kind of fat that can reduce your risk of having a heart attack.
9. All-bran or 100% bran cereal - Loaded with dietary fibre and many other nutrients.
10. Spinach or kale - Another vitamin C winner, in addition to high levels of phytochemicals like carotenoids.

Sources:

Health, Nutrition, and Diet: Center for Science in the Public Interest. (n.d.) Retrieved December 16, 2004 from <http://cspinet.org/nutrition>  
 Nutritious Bang for your Caloric Buck. (2005, Winter). HealthIssues Newsletter, p.9.  
 Sizer, F., & Whitney, W. (2003). Nutrition Concepts and Controversies, 9th edition.

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## Mango Black Bean Salsa



### Mango Black Bean Salsa

This recipe is quick and nutritious! Serve as a snack with nacho chips; over rice or baked chicken; or as a side salad.

- 540 ml (19 oz) canned black beans
- 1 diced mango (or 2-3 diced peaches)
- 125 ml (½ c) diced red onion

- Dressing:**
- 60 ml (¼ c) lemon juice
  - 30 ml (2 tbsp) vegetable oil
  - 15 ml (1 tbsp) sugar
  - 60 ml (¼ c) chopped fresh cilantro or parsley (optional)

In a large bowl mix in black beans, mango or peaches and onion.

In a small bowl combine dressing ingredients and pour over bean mixture. Mix.

Chill for one hour before serving.

Makes 6 - 8 servings

**PER SERVING** (approximately)  
Calories 175 Fat 4 g

**Some Key Nutrients**  
Beta-carotene • Fibre • Folic acid  
Protein

Source:  
Smith, N. (2002). *Healthy eating for a healthy baby.* [Electronic version]. Best Start and the Nutrition Resource Centre. Toronto, Ontario.



### Roasted Sweet-Potato Soup with Orange and Ginger

- 1.5 L (6 c) yams or sweet potatoes peeled and cubed (about 3 large)
- 375 ml (1½ c) onions coarsely chopped
- 15 ml (1 tbsp) olive oil
- 1 clove garlic, minced
- 1.25 L (5 c) low-fat chicken broth
- 15 ml (1 tbsp) each grated orange zest and gingerroot
- 1 whole clove
- 2 ml (½ tsp) each ground cumin and salt
- 1 ml (¼ tsp) black pepper
- 90 ml (6 tbsp) low-fat sour cream
- fresh cilantro, chopped, for garnish

Spray a shallow roasting pan with non-stick spray. Add yams, onions, olive oil, and garlic. Stir well. Roast, uncovered, at 220°C (425°F) for 25 minutes. Stirring once.

Transfer mixture to a soup pot. Add rest of ingredients. Bring to a boil. Reduce heat to medium-low and simmer, covered, for 10 minutes.

Transfer soup to a blender or food processor and puree until smooth. Serve hot with a swirl of sour cream in the center. Garnish with fresh cilantro.

Makes 6 servings

**PER SERVING**  
Calories 209 Fat 4 g Fiber 5 g

**Some Key Nutrients**  
Beta-carotene • Fibre • Potassium

Source: From the *Crazy Plates* cookbook by Janet and Greta Podleski. Granet Publishing Inc. 1999. Available at all major bookstores.



## HUMMUS



### HUMMUS

- 540 ml (19 oz) canned chick peas, drained
- 2 green onions
- 2 cloves garlic
- 60 ml (¼ c) fresh lemon juice
- 60 ml (¼ c) tahini (found in bulk foods or natural products section; it's actually sesame seed paste)
- 2 ml (½ tsp) ground cumin
- 2 ml (½ tsp) salt
- 125 ml (½ c) low fat plain yogurt (<2% M.F.)

In food processor or blender, puree chick peas, green onions, garlic, lemon juice, tahini and seasonings until smooth. Stir in yogurt until well combined. Garnish with onion, tomato and parsley. Serve chilled or at room temperature with raw veggies, whole grain crackers or pita bread.

Serving size 60 ml (¼ c)

**PER SERVING**  
Calories 220 Fat 5 g

**Some Key Nutrients**  
Fibre • Folic acid • Protein

Source:  
Bishop MacDonald, H. and Howard, M. (1990). *Eat Well, Live Well - The Canadian Dietetic Association's Guide to Healthy Eating.* Macmillan of Canada. Toronto, Ontario.

