

7 colors for health



Color-coding can be a useful device to introduce diversity into the diet. The different colors are important because the different plant chemicals they represent have different effects on the body. There are two purposes for this classification. First, it is meant to increase the diversity of the plant foods you eat. Second, it groups these according to mechanisms that the phytochemicals in each group provide. By eating regularly from each group, you will obtain a rich group of phytochemicals to help promote good health. And remember not to overdo a good thing: Fruits and vegetables have a lot of nutrients per serving, so always be sure to keep portion size reasonable.

COLOR GROUP	PREVENTIVE BENEFITS*	FOODS
Red (lycopene)	Prostate and lung cancer Heart disease Antioxidant	Tomatoes, pasta sauce, tomato soup, tomato-based juices (spicy or regular) and ketchup; pink grapefruit, guava and watermelon
Red/Purple (anthocyanidins, resveratrol)	Protects DNA Antioxidant Anticancer	Grapes, cranberries, blueberries, blackberries, strawberries, pomegranate, plums and cherries
Orange (alpha-and beta-carotene)	Antioxidant Anticancer	Carrots, mangos, apricots, winter squash, cantaloupe, pumpkin, acorn squash and sweet potatoes
Orange/Yellow (terpenoids, Vitamin C)	Antioxidant Anticancer Heart disease	Oranges, tangerines, yellow grapefruit, lemon, lime, peaches, papaya and pineapple; lemon, lime and orange zest
Yellow/Green (lutein)	Vision Anticancer Heart disease	Spinach, avocado, collard, mustard or turnip greens, green peas, green beans, green peppers, yellow peppers, cucumber and kiwi
Green (glucosinolates)	Anticancer Heart disease	Broccoli, Brussels sprouts, cabbage, kale, cauliflower, Chinese cabbage or bok choi
White/Green (allyl sulfides)	Circulation Blood pressure	Garlic, onions, leeks, celery, asparagus, artichoke, endive and chives

* These benefits are potential and based on the current understanding of science in these areas. Also the various fruits and vegetables in each group have multiple compounds that work together to provide some of these benefits. Only the major ones are used to form the groupings.