

## High Antioxidant Foods

|              |                   |                  |      |                 |     |
|--------------|-------------------|------------------|------|-----------------|-----|
| Prunes       | 5770 <sup>1</sup> | Spinach          | 1260 | Oranges         | 750 |
| Raisins      | 2830              | Raspberries      | 1220 | Red grapes      | 739 |
| Blueberries  | 2400              | Brussels sprouts | 980  | Red bell pepper | 710 |
| Blackberries | 2036              | Plums            | 949  | Cherries        | 670 |
| Garlic       | 1940              | Alfalfa sprouts  | 930  | Kiwi fruit      | 602 |
| Kale         | 1770              | Broccoli flowers | 890  | Pink grapefruit | 483 |
| Strawberries | 1540              | Beets            | 840  |                 |     |

<sup>1</sup> Oxygen Radical Absorbance Capacity, umol of Trolox eqivs. per 100 gm wet weight edible portion, approx. 3 ½ oz.

Other fruits and vegetables tested had smaller amounts of antioxidant capacity. In order from more to least antioxidant capacity were white grapes, onion, yellow corn, eggplant, cauliflower, peas, potato, sweet potato, cabbage, leaf lettuce, string beans, carrots, yellow squash, iceberg lettuce, celery and cucumbers.

## High Antioxidant Beverages

Green and black teas had a much higher antioxidant capacity than the vegetables tested. Of the commercial fruit juices tested, grape juice had the highest antioxidant capacity, followed by grapefruit juice, tomato juice, orange juice, and apple juice.

## What are Antioxidants?

Antioxidants are substances in plants that help maintain health. Research suggests that eating plenty of foods high in antioxidants helps slow the processes associated with aging and protect against many chronic diseases. Antioxidants protect against damage to cells caused by too many “free oxygen radicals,” which form because of oxidation. Examples of oxidation are bananas turning brown when exposed to air, and iron rusting. Smoking, sunlight, and pollution all increase oxidation in the body.

Most people would benefit by eating more fruits and vegetables. The most reliable way to get needed antioxidant nutrients is to eat five to nine or more servings of fruits and vegetables each day. Choose very colorful plant foods, such as purple, dark green, yellow, orange, blue, and red ones. These have healthful pigments along with antioxidant nutrients such as vitamin C, carotenoids, beta-carotene, lycopene, lutein, zeaxanthin, vitamin E, selenium, flavonoids, and other beneficial substances.

References: 1. Cao G, Sofic E, Prior RL. Antioxidant capacity of tea and common vegetables. *J Agric Food Chem* 1996; 44:3426-343.

<http://pubs.acs.org/subscribe/journals/jafcau/jtext.cgi?jafcau/44/i11/html/jf9602535.html>

2. Wang H, Cao G, Prior RL. Total antioxidant capacity of fruits. *J Agric Food Chem* 1996; 44:701-5.

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