

Functional Foods Q and A's

What are functional foods?

Functional foods are foods that provide health benefits **beyond** (in addition to) basic nutrition. When eaten on a regular basis as part of a varied diet, these foods may decrease your risk for developing diseases like heart disease or cancer.

What are some examples of functional foods?

Take **tomatoes** for instance. Tomatoes are high in Vitamin C, an important nutrient for health. Researchers have also found that eating tomatoes and tomato products (containing the functional food component, lycopene) may decrease the risk for developing certain cancers.



Garlic contains naturally occurring sulfur compounds. Add some fresh garlic to your salad dressing. Eating more garlic may decrease your risk of heart disease by lowering LDL (bad) cholesterol.

Some **fatty fish** like tuna, salmon, sardines, and mackerel contain omega-3 fatty acids. Eating more fatty fish may decrease your risk of heart disease by lowering blood triglyceride levels.



Oats and oatmeal contain beta-glucan, a type of soluble fiber. Choosing oats more often may decrease your risk of heart disease by decreasing total and LDL (bad) cholesterol.

Red and purple grapes and purple grape juice contain polyphenolic compounds. Eating red and purple grapes and drinking purple grape juice more often may decrease your risk of heart disease by preventing the oxidation of low-density (bad) cholesterol.



Soy foods like tofu, soy milk, soy nuts and soybeans contain soy protein and isoflavones. Soy protein may decrease your risk of heart disease by lowering blood cholesterol levels.

