

Summer Lovin' One Thing to Improve Your Diet – Tomatoes!



Tomatoes are in season during the summer, so take advantage of all the benefits! Tomatoes are rich in the antioxidant, lycopene, which helps to eliminate free radicals that want to damage our healthy cells. Moreover, there are numerous studies on how tomatoes could increase bone and heart health. This low-calorie fruit can be eaten in a variety of ways, and you should eat them in any way you prefer.

Health Benefits of Tomatoes

- ✓ **Excellent source of antioxidants**
- ✓ **Contributes to heart health** – decreases risk of heart disease and salicylates in tomatoes prevents clotting of blood
- ✓ **Contributes to bone health** – tomatoes have vitamin K which helps maintain strong bones
- ✓ **Decreases risk of certain cancers** – prostate, pancreatic, and breast cancer
- ✓ **Low in calories and fats**
- ✓ **Blocks ultraviolet (UV) rays** – enhances body's ability to block UV rays

Ways to Use Tomatoes

- Eat them whole like an apple
- Tomato soup
- Pasta sauce
- Make some salsa (healthy alternative to store-bought dip)
- Make bruschetta for a snack or an appetizer
- Grill tomatoes
- Add slices in your sandwiches
- Add them to salads
- Add them to rice

Tip

- It is best to eat tomatoes with their skin
- You can freeze tomatoes in any form for up to 8 months



Rice-Stuffed Tomatoes

Serving: 6 Servings

Ingredients:

- 2-3 tablespoons of olive oil
- 6 medium or large tomatoes
- 1 minced garlic clove
- 9 tablespoons of your choice of rice
- few tablespoons of chopped parsley or basil
- optional: onions, grated parmesan, salt, pepper



Directions:

- cook the rice as directed
- preheat oven to 350 degrees F
- cut the top of each tomato, and scoop out the pulp/juice (reserve in small bowl)
- toss the cooked rice with the reserved tomato pulp/juice with garlic, 2 table spoons of olive oil, and desired herbs and spices
- spoon the mixture into the hallowed tomatoes and drizzle with olive oil
- place the cut top back on the tomatoes (optional)
- bake for 20 minutes or until the rice is heated through

Magee, E. (2007). Health properties of tomatoes. Retrieved from www.webmd.com/food-recipes/health-properties-tomatoes?page=1

The World's Healthiest Food. (n.d.). Tomatoes. Retrieved from www.whfoods.com/genpage.php?name=foodspice&dbid=44#healthbenefits