



## RESILIENT!

LEADERSHIP & THE INTEGRAL LIFE

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Edited by Dr Sven Hansen

Welcome to RESILIENT! - Our client newsletter which aims to bring you topical and practical ideas to improve leadership, build resilient organisations and create a meaningful life.

## Top 25 Foods to Protect your Cardiovascular System

By Dr Sven Hansen

Leading preventative cardiology clinics such as The Cleveland Clinic are beginning to agree on the best foods in terms of preventing the damage and blocking of our arteries that is generally called Cardiovascular disease. In short these are the foods that can protect us from heart attacks, stroke and therefore a range of other degenerative diseases.

Many of these diseases are caused by years of "free radical damage" or "oxidative stress" which is simply part of living, breathing, burning energy and being exposed to excessive radiation, damaged foods and smoking.

Foods that deliver a powerful dose of phytonutrients – essential micronutrients that come from fresh foods – combat free radicals and oxidative stress in the blood vessels and tissues. Phytonutrients, which include antioxidants such as vitamin C, lycopene, and vitamin E, protect our cells, their walls and their DNA from damage. They also assist in repairing existing damage.



Cardiovascular disease is one of Australia's largest health problems. Despite improvements over the last few decades, it remains one of the biggest burdens on our economy.

Cardiovascular disease:

- kills one Australian nearly every 10 minutes
- affects more than 3.5 million Australians
- prevents 1.4 million people from living a full life because of disability caused by the disease
- affects one in five Australians, and affects two out of three families
- claimed the lives of almost 46,000 Australians (34% of all deaths) in 2006 - deaths that are largely preventable.

Ref: Extract from Australian Heart Foundation Website. [www.heartfoundation.com.au](http://www.heartfoundation.com.au)

Here are the top 25 foods for cardiovascular protection. The key is variety, freshness and minimum interference between nature and eating.



## Top 25 Foods to Protect your Cardiovascular System

#	Food	Nutrient	Preparation
1.	Salmon	Omega 3 fatty acids	Grilled
2.	Flaxseed (ground/oil)	Omega 3, fibre, phytoestrogens	In cereals, baking
3.	Oatmeal	Omega 3, magnesium, potassium, folate, niacin, calcium & fibre	Raw, baked or porridge
4.	Black/Kidney Beans	B vitamins, niacin, folate, magnesium, omega 3 & fibre	Cooked, soup or salad
5.	Almonds	Omega 3, vitamin E, magnesium, fibre, monounsaturated fats & phytosterols	Snacks, cereal, salad
6.	Walnuts	Omega 3, vit E, magnesium, folate, monounsaturated fats, phytosterols	Snacks, cereal, salad, muffins...
7.	Red wine	Catechins and resveratrol, increases HDL	Limit to a glass or two 5 x week
8.	Tuna	Omega 3, folate, niacin	Salad, sandwich or grilled
9.	Tofu	Niacin, folate, calcium, magnesium, potassium	Marinate, grill or stir fry
10.	Brown rice	B vitamins, fibre, niacin & magnesium	Add veggies
11.	Soy milk	Isoflavones, B vitamins, niacin, folate, phytoestrogens, magn & potassium	Cereal or smoothie or try in coffee
12.	Blueberries & other red berries	Carotenoids, anthocyanin (flavonoids), polyphenols, Vit C, folate & more	Add to cereal, snacks & muffins
13.	Carrots	Alpha carotene and fibre	Snacks, juice, salad
14.	Spinach	Lutein, B vitamins, folate, magnesium, potassium & fibre	Salad, juice, sandwich
15.	Broccoli	Beta carotene, Vit C & E, potassium, folate, calcium & fibre	Snack, soup, salad, steamed
16.	Sweet potato (kumara)	Beta carotene, Vit A, C & E, fibre	Bake, microwave
17.	Red capsicum	Beta carotene, lutein, B vitamins, folate, potassium, fibre	Fresh, grilled, roasted
18.	Asparagus	B carotene, lutein, B vitamins, folate & fibre	Grill, steam, add olive oil & lemon
19.	Oranges	Carotenoids, flavones, vitamin C, potassium, folate & fibre	OJ
20.	Tomatoes	Carotenoids +++, lycopene, vitamin C, potassium, folate & fibre	Fresh, grilled or cooked in pizza
21.	Squash	Carotenoids, B & C vitamins, folate, calcium, magnesium, potassium & fibre	Bake with pine nuts
22.	Cantaloupe	Carotenoids++, Vit B & C, folate, potassium & fibre	Breakfast, desserts
23.	Papaya	Carotenoids++, Vit C & E, folate, calcium, magnesium & potassium	Breakfast, dessert & with salmon
24.	Dark Chocolate	Resveratrol & flavonoids	70% or higher cocoa
25.	Tea	Catechins & flavonoids	3mins to draw antioxidants



## PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS TO OPTIMISE YOUR INTAKE

1. Shop smart and seek out quality suppliers of fresh local produce
2. Put tomatoes, baby carrots, capsicum and fruit out before meals
3. Always have a fresh fruit bowl nearby
4. Prepare handy almond, walnut and dried fruit snacks
5. Consider juicing your own vegetables and fruit (slow juicing is preferred)
6. Develop a habit of selecting 4 or more veggies per evening meal
7. Look out for veggies as a lunch (take last night's left-overs to work)
8. If pressured choose fresh-frozen veggies and microwave

## GUIDE TO PHYTONUTRIENTS FOR THE ENTHUSIAST

**Phytoestrogens** are substances in plants (like flaxseed) that have a weak estrogen-like action in the body. Studies suggest that flaxseed lowers the risk of blood clots, stroke, and cardiac arrhythmias. It may also help lower total and LDL "bad" cholesterol and triglycerides, and even blood pressure.

**Phytosterols** are plant sterols that chemically resemble cholesterol -- and seem to reduce blood cholesterol. All nuts and seeds, including wheat germ, have phytosterols.

**Carotenoids** are heart-protective antioxidants in many colourful fruits and veggies. Alpha-carotene, beta-carotene, lutein, and lycopene are carotenoids.

**Polyphenols** are another set of antioxidants that protect blood vessels, lower blood pressure, reduce LDL "bad" cholesterol. **Flavonoid** polyphenols include catechins, flavonones, flavonols, isoflavones, resveratrol, and anthocyanins. **Non-flavonoid** polyphenols include ellagic acid (found in all types of berries).

**Omega-3 fatty acids** (found in fatty fish like salmon) and **alpha-linolenic fatty acids** (found in plant foods like walnuts) help boost the immune system, reduce blood clots, and protect against heart attacks. They also increase good HDL levels, lower triglyceride levels, protect arteries from plaque build-up, are anti-inflammatories, and lower blood pressure.

**B-complex vitamins** -- like **Vitamin B-12 (folate)** and **vitamin B-6** -- protect against blood clots and atherosclerosis, or hardening of the arteries. **Niacin (vitamin B-3)** helps increase HDL "good" cholesterol.

**Vitamins C and E** are antioxidants that protect cells from free radical damage.

**Magnesium, potassium, and calcium** help lower blood pressure.

**Fibre-rich** foods help lower cholesterol levels and may protect the bowel from a range of digestive illnesses.

### About Us

Based in Australia, New Zealand and Canada, The Resilience Institute works with senior executives and the entire employee base to build organisational and personal resilience. The Resilience Institute uses an evidence-based approach to introduce the personal disciplines of sustainable high performance within a meaningful life. The Resilience Institute achieves sustainable and measurable improvements using assessment instruments, consulting reviews, workshop interventions and personal coaching.

### For further information...

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