

Eight superfoods that your gut will love



Benefits of healthy eating

It's true, we really are what we eat. Your gut loves to digest healthy food. The amazing thing is that you can cultivate a new microbiota within days by changing your diet.¹ Sticking to a gut-friendly bacteria diet over time — especially one that includes the superfoods described on the next page — can promote diverse bacteria colonies that may help combat:^{2,3,4}

- obesity
- type 2 diabetes
- heart disease
- autoimmune disease
- mental health disorders
- certain forms of cancer
- gastrointestinal disorders
- cardiovascular disease
- immune system deficiencies
- psoriatic arthritis

First, let's review the difference between probiotic and prebiotic foods:

- Probiotic foods contain healthy live bacteria
- Prebiotic foods and spices nourish the healthy bacteria already living in your body

There is great variety in foods good for your gut health. We encourage you to experiment. Think of this as an adventure in eating. You might even discover some wonderful foods you may never have eaten before.

Why superfoods are super

Superfood ⁶	Benefits for your gut ⁴
Asparagus, Jerusalem artichokes, leeks and onions	These are high in inulin, which has strong prebiotic potential. Once they find their way to the colon, they ferment into healthy microbiota. Ease into Jerusalem artichokes, as people with sensitive digestive tracts may notice increased gas.
Bananas	This popular fruit may reduce gut inflammation due to high levels of potassium and magnesium. Bananas work to maintain harmony among microbes in the bacterial community known as phyla. This is one reason bananas are a standard prescription for an upset stomach.
Beans	Packed with fiber protein, folate and B vitamins, beans play a role in regulating a healthy gut and a healthy brain. Researchers have recently shown that legumes may also improve weight loss by enhancing the feeling of being full.
Blueberries	We're not sure if it's the antioxidants, vitamin K compounds or fiber that gives blueberries clout as a superfood, but studies show they may boost memory, improve your immune system and diversify gut bacteria.
Broccoli and other cruciferous vegetables	Cruciferous vegetables such as broccoli, kale, cabbage and cauliflower feature sulfur-containing metabolites. These are broken down by microbes to release substances that reduce inflammation and can reduce the risk of bladder, breast, colon, liver, lung and stomach cancer. People who eat the most cruciferous vegetables can significantly reduce their risk of colorectal cancer.
Fermented plant foods	Fermented foods, such as kimchi, sauerkraut, tempeh and soy sauce, directly inoculate our gut with healthy live microorganisms that crowd out the unhealthy bacteria while increasing the absorption of minerals and helping to improve overall health. They may improve the health of the intestinal cells and immune function, decrease allergies, reduce the risk of colon cancer and treat diarrhea.
Polenta	Polenta is rich in high-fiber complex carbohydrates, which ferment in the colon into many strands of gut bacteria. Corn, the base of polenta, earns credit for fostering a healthy gut. Polenta's insoluble fiber travels directly to the colon, where it ferments into multiple strands of gut flora. It's good to note that polenta varies in fermentable components.
Probiotics	Every supermarket now stocks active yogurts and probiotic drinks, and studies suggest that they can favorably impact your mental health and well-being. ⁵ If you are considering taking a probiotic supplement for depression, consult with your healthcare provider first.

Sources:

1. Nature Outlook, The Gut Microbiome, January 29, 2020. Available from www.nature.com.
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4. Physicians Committee for Responsible Medicine. Plant-based Foods Improve Gut Microbiota Linked to Lower Disease Risk, January 12, 2021. Available from www.pcrm.org.
5. Raypole, C. Can Probiotics Help with Depression? March 21, 2019. Available from www.healthline.com.

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