

# HEALTH ADVISORY

## **5 FOOD WOMEN NEED MOST**

1. **PAPAYA** – This fruit packed about twice the vitamin C of an orange. Add it to you arsenal against the gallbladder disease, which afflicts twice as many women as men. After analyzing the blood of over 13,000 people, scientist from the University of California, San Francisco, found that women who had lower levels of vitamin C were most likely to have gallbladder illnesses. One medium papaya (about 280 grams), with 188 milligrams of C and a mere kilo-joules, is a refreshing source of the vitamin. Best of all, it's probably growing n your garden.
2. **FLAXSEED** – Bakers use this nutty-flavored seed mainly to add flavor and fiber. But scientists see the tiny reddish-brown seed, rich in estrogen-like compounds called lignans, as a potential weapon against Breast Cancer Symposium showed that adding flaxseed to the diet of women with breast cancer effectively slowed tumor growth. You can flavour your muffins with flaxseed, but the easiest way to get the beneficial lignans is to sprinkle a few tablespoons of ground flaxseed on your morning cereals. Look for the seeds in health food shops. They are easy to grind in a blinder. But get seeds – there are no lignans in the oil.
3. **TOFU** – Foods high in soya protein can lower cholesterol and may minimize menopausal hot flushes and strengthen bone. Isoflavones, plant chemicals in soybeans that have a structure similar to estrogen. May be the reason. Though animal studies from the bulk of evidence, a human study found that 90 milligrams of Isoflavones was beneficial to bone (specifically the spine). And two other studies suggest that 50 to 76 milligrams of Isoflavones a day may offer some relief from hot flushes. Half a cup of tofu contains about 25 to 35 milligrams of Isoflavones.
4. **PORK** – Due largely to menstruation, women tend to be more anemic than men. And low iron levels in blood can cause severe fatigue. To get a good dose of iron, try pork. It has what every diet-conscious women wants-lots of iron and fat that can be easily removed,

compare to most cuts of meat. According to the Asian Food Information Centre in Singapore, a palm-sized pork steak has about 1.4 milligrams of iron. Best of all, says Dr. Mark Wahlqvist, president of the International Union of Nutrition Sciences, eating a small amount of pork with a meal increases the absorption of iron from accompanying vegetables and cereals.

5. ***CABBAGE*** – This humble vegetable may help fight osteoporosis, which affects many woman late in life. In addition to getting adequate amounts of calcium and vitamin D, some studies suggest that vitamin K may have a bone-protective effect as well. Based on data from one of the largest studies of women, the Nurses' Health Study, researchers discovered that women who ate enough vitamin K-rich foods (at least 109 micrograms of the vitamin daily) were 30 percent less likely to suffer a hip fracture during ten years of follow up than women who ate less. Researches point out that dark-green leafy vegetables-brussels sprouts, spinach, broccoli-are all good sources of the vitamin. But cabbage is among the best.

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1. ***TOMATO SAUCE*** – Men who eat a lot of tomatoes, tomato sauce, or pizza smothered with the stuff may be giving themselves a hedge against prostate cancer. So say researches at Harvard University, who studied the eating habits of more than 47,000 male health professionals. They found that men who ate tomato sauce two to four times per week had a 35 percent lower risk of developing prostate cancer than men who ate none. A carotenoid called lycopene, which tomatoes contain in abundance, appeared to be responsible. But scientists were puzzled tomato juice didn't seem to have a protective effect. Other research show why. For best absorption, lycopene should be cooked with some kind of fat. So pizza may be just what the doctor ordered.
2. ***OYSTERS*** – Myth has it that oysters are the food of love. Science may agree. Just two to three oysters deliver a full day's supply of zinc, a mineral critical for normal functioning of the male reproductive system. Scientists are delivered over reports that sperm count have declined over the last 50 years and that environmental factors are to blame. Nutritional deficiencies do seem to be the cause of certain cases of low testosterone. Getting adequate zinc is sometimes the answer (up to 15 milligrams per day is recommended for men, more than 40 milligrams can pose risk). In one trial, 22 men with low testosterone level sperm counts were given zinc every day to 45 to 50 days. Testosterone levels and sperm count rose.

3. ***BROCCOLI*** – A recent Harvard study finds that cruciferous vegetables, like broccoli, may protect against bladder cancer which is common among Asian men. Scientists analyzed the diets of nearly 50,000 men and discovered that those who ate five servings or more per week of cruciferous veggies were half as likely to develop bladder cancer over a ten-year period as men who rarely ate them. And broccoli and cabbage were singled out as the most protective foods.
4. ***PEANUT BUTTER*** – If you want a healthy heart, spread your morning toast with peanut butter. Heart disease is the leading killer of men and women, but men fall victim at an earlier age. Researches from Pennsylvania State University compared the cholesterol-lowering effect of the step II Diet of the American Heart Association (AHA) with a higher-fat diet based on peanuts. The AHA plan include more carbohydrates. The peanut regimen was 36 percent fat. After 24 days both diets lowered “bad” LDL cholesterol. But the peanut plan also caused a drop of blood fats called triglycerides and did not decrease HDL, the “good” cholesterol. The AHA diet raised levels of triglycerides and lowered levels of HDL. “Peanut butter is a little higher in fat,” says Penny Kris-Etherton, the lead author of the study. But it is the type that’s good for your monounsaturated fat.” Researches have predicted that the peanut diet could reduce heart disease risk even more than the AHA diet could. Just don’t go nutty plastering on the tasty spread, since it is high in kilojoules.
5. ***WATERMELON*** – Until the age of 55, more men suffer from high blood pressure than do women, Research suggests that food rich in potassium can reduce the risk of blood pressure and stroke. The evidence is so convincing that the US Food and Drug Administration recently allowed food labels to bear a health claim about the connection between potassium-rich-foods and high blood pressure. “A good goal for potassium is about 2000 milligrams or more a day.” Says Antigone Blazos, a lecturer at Asia Pacific Health and Nutrition Centre in Melbourne, Australia. Watermelon is a rich source of this mineral and has more potassium -664 milligrams – in just one large slice than the amount found in banana or a glass of orange juice. So cut yourself another slice and enjoy its cool taste.