# Are these the five most powerful foods for longevity (among other things)? Looks like it!



A good diet is seen as one of the essential ways to support the body as we age and lower the risk of diseases alongside exercise and other lifestyle habits. A significant study of UK adults suggested that adopting “longevity-associated dietary patterns” could potentially add a decade to one's life. These dietary changes involve consuming more whole grains, nuts, and fruit, while reducing intake of sugary drinks and processed meats, as reported by PlantBasedNews.org.

Dr Michael Greger, renowned author and founder of nutritionfacts.org, points out that diets rich in whole plant foods often correlate with a reduced risk of premature death. With an emphasis on plant-based nutrition, several doctors shared their thoughts on the top five foods for promoting longevity.

* WalnutsNuts, especially walnuts, have been linked to a 30% decreased risk of death from causes like cardiovascular diseases. Walnuts are hailed for their array of nutrients, which promote heart health. Studies demonstrate that a walnut-enriched diet can lead to healthier blood lipid profiles, potentially lowering the risk of heart disease. Their high content of polyunsaturated fatty acids, alongside anti-inflammatory compounds, makes walnuts beneficial for brain and heart health.
* LegumesLegumes are associated with longevity, with high consumption linked to living past 70 in various ethnic groups. Beans, lentils, chickpeas, and soybeans offer calcium, iron, magnesium, and help regulate blood sugar levels due to their low glycemic index. Dr Greger highlights their fibre and resistant starch, which support gut health and immunity. Soybeans, in particular, are noted for reducing risks of heart disease and cancer.
* Cruciferous VegetablesVegetables like broccoli, kale, and cabbage are packed with antioxidants and phytochemicals. Such cruciferous vegetables have been linked to a reduced risk of death from cardiovascular diseases and cancer due to their anti-inflammatory and antioxidant properties. Watercress, another member of the Brassica genus, is noted for its nutrient density in improving longevity.
* BerriesBerries, rich in antioxidants like flavonoids, are recommended for their potential to lower mortality risks. The consumption of berries is linked with improved brain function as we age. Notably, strawberries lead in vitamin C content, which supports immune health.
* TubersTubers, such as sweet potatoes, particularly the purple variety, are credited for contributing to the longevity of Okinawa’s centenarians. Though often overlooked, potatoes provide potassium, fibre, vitamin C, and phenolic acids. How they are cooked – boiled over fried – impacts their health benefits. Other notable tubers include carrots, rich in beta-carotene, alongside ginger and turmeric renowned for their anti-inflammatory properties.

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The global elderly population is on the rise, which presents significant challenges for healthcare systems worldwide. Fortunately, dietary changes can significantly enhance life quality and longevity, according to Dr. Barnard. Adopting a diet rich in whole plant-based foods, such as the ones listed, could play a pivotal role in supporting healthier, longer lives.

## References

* <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/37985698/> - Corroborates the study suggesting that adopting 'longevity-associated dietary patterns' could add up to 10 years to one's life, emphasizing the consumption of whole grains, nuts, and fruits while reducing sugary drinks and processed meats.
* <https://medicalxpress.com/news/2023-11-healthier-diet-ten-years-life.html> - Supports the finding that switching to a healthier diet can add nearly 10 years to life expectancy, highlighting the impact of dietary changes on longevity.
* <https://www.news-medical.net/news/20231123/Unlocking-healthier-futures-Estimating-life-expectancy-gains-through-sustained-adoption-of-healthier-diets.aspx> - Details the longevity-associated diet characterized by low intake of unhealthy foods and high intake of whole grains, nuts, and fruits, aligning with the benefits of such dietary patterns.
* <https://www.medicalnewstoday.com/articles/switching-to-a-healthier-diet-linked-to-improved-longevity> - Provides evidence that adopting the UK’s Eatwell Guide diet can add nearly 9 years to life expectancy, emphasizing the importance of whole grains, nuts, and reducing sugary drinks and processed meats.
* <https://www.thewholehealthpractice.com/post/shifting-diets-towards-longevity-lessons-from-the-uk-for-singapore-and-the-world> - Highlights the benefits of dietary changes, including increased consumption of whole grains and nuts, and reduced consumption of sugary drinks and processed meats, for life expectancy gains.
* <https://www.medicalnewstoday.com/articles/switching-to-a-healthier-diet-linked-to-improved-longevity> - Supports the idea that legumes, such as beans, lentils, chickpeas, and soybeans, are beneficial for longevity due to their nutritional content and health benefits.
* <https://www.medicalnewstoday.com/articles/best-foods-for-heart-health> - Although not directly from the provided sources, this link generally supports the health benefits of nuts like walnuts, which are known for their heart health benefits and are mentioned in the context of reducing cardiovascular disease risk.
* <https://www.healthline.com/nutrition/cruciferous-vegetables> - Although not directly from the provided sources, this link supports the health benefits of cruciferous vegetables like broccoli, kale, and cabbage, which are known for their antioxidants and phytochemicals.