

# THE Wellness Minute

Nutrition Series: 3.2  
Orcutt Office (805) 934-5761

Dr. Greg Anderson, Chiropractor

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Buellton Office (805) 686-2700

## Eat By the Colors, Part 2

### What Are Some of The Other Colors That Are Important?

In the last issue we discussed the importance of blue/purple and green foods. Today we discuss more...

**Yellow/Green:** A variation of the green color category, these foods exhibit a richness in lutein. Lutein is particularly beneficial for eye health. There are lutein receptors in the macula of the eye, and lutein helps protect against age-related macular degeneration. There is lutein in the green skin around the nut. Yellow-green foods also contain a high amount of vitamin C. **Examples:** Avocado, kiwi, spinach, pistachios and other green leafy vegetables.

**Red:** Lycopene is the predominant pigment in reddish fruits and veggies. A carotenoid, lycopene is a powerful antioxidant that has been associated with a reduced risk of some cancers, especially prostate cancer, and protection against heart attacks. cooking enhances the activity of some phytochemicals, such as lycopene. In addition to vitamin C and folate, red fruits and vegetables are also sources of flavonoids, which reduce inflammation and have antioxidant properties. **Examples:** Tomatoes and tomato products, watermelon, pink grapefruit, guava, and cranberries.

**Yellow/Orange:** The orange/yellow group represents beta-cryptoxanthin and vitamin C. The orange group foods are also rich in beta-carotene, which are



particularly good antioxidants. Beta-cryptoxanthin, beta-carotene, and alpha-carotene are all orange-friendly carotenoids and can be converted in the body to vitamin A, a nutrient integral for vision and immune function, as well as skin and bone health. These foods are commonly considered the eyesight foods because they contain vitamin A. Beta-carotene, which can be converted into vitamin A, is a component of these foods as well. In addition, they may have high levels of vitamin C, and some contain omega-3 fatty acids. Since eyesight is dependent on the presence of vitamin A, it is considered the "vision vitamin. Other phytochemicals typically found in yellow/orange fruits and vegetables protect our eyes from cataracts and have anti-inflammatory properties. They also help with blood sugar regulation. The beta-carotenes in some orange fruits and vegetables may also play a part in preventing cancer, particularly of the lung, esophagus, and stomach. They may also reduce the risk of heart disease and improve immune function. **Examples:** Carrots, mango, cantaloupe, winter squash, pumpkin, sweet potatoes, and apricots.