



Top 10 Foods for Eye Health

Eating the right foods is essential for maintaining healthy eyes. [Antioxidants](#) have been credited with preventing illness and anti-aging protection from degenerative disease.

Foods rich in [carotenoids](#), the antioxidant pigment that gives color to produce, have been shown to reduce the risk of macular degeneration, the leading cause of severe vision loss in people over age 60.¹ As a rule, fruits and vegetables with the most color have more antioxidants.

Studies show that a higher dietary intake of lutein and zeaxanthin, carotenoids that often appear together, is related to a reduced risk of cataracts and age-related eye conditions.²

According to the American Optometric Association, these antioxidants are of great benefit to eye health and can also improve vision in those already afflicted with these disorders. Lutein and zeaxanthin protect the retina from the harmful effects of the free radicals in UV light and greatly reduce the risk for cataracts and macular degeneration.³

According to Sarah Francis, assistant professor and nutrition specialist at Iowa State University, “Carotenoids are like sun block for the cells in your body.” protect the retina from the harmful effects of the free radicals in UV light and greatly reduce the risk for cataracts and macular degeneration.

Eat these foods often to promote and protect healthy eyes

1. Dark green leafy vegetables such as, kale, [spinach](#), collard, turnip and mustard greens are the best source of lutein and zeaxanthin. Leafy greens are also a rich source of vitamin C, which may prevent glaucoma.⁴
2. [Carrots](#) and yams are rich in eye healthy antioxidants and very high in beta-carotene, the pigment in bright orange fruits and vegetables and a precursor for vitamin A. Vitamin A is critical to normal vision and plays a major role in preventing night blindness and maintaining a healthy cornea.
3. [Broccoli](#) is a member of the cruciferous family related to kale, cauliflower, Brussels sprouts, cabbage and collard greens. Broccoli contains high levels of lutein, zeaxanthin and vitamin C.

4. [Citrus fruits](#), strawberries and orange juice are rich in vitamin C as are tomatoes and red bell peppers, which also contain lutein and lycopene and also credited with supporting eye health.
5. Many fruits are rich in lutein and zeaxanthin apricots, peaches, mangoes, papayas, oranges, tangerines and melons, especially cantaloupe are among those with the most content.
6. [Herbs](#) and spices, such as curry and dill, parsley and watercress contain significant concentrations of lutein. Unlike vitamins and minerals, the bioavailability of lutein is increased with cooking.⁵
7. [Flax seeds](#) and flax oil are rich in omega 3 fatty acids thought to reverse the effects of dry eye syndrome (DES)⁶
8. [Garlic](#), sunflower seeds, Brazil nuts, black walnuts, oatmeal and brown rice contain selenium, a key mineral that helps to absorb antioxidants in the prevention of eye disease.
9. Garbanzo beans, kidney beans, oatmeal and whole wheat bread contain zinc, an important mineral that works with antioxidants to play a role in promoting overall eye health.
10. Wheat germ, soy and safflower oil are rich in vitamin E, as are pistachios, peanuts and particularly almonds. Associated with the prevention of cataracts high levels of vitamin E are found in green leafy vegetables and fortified cereal.

Posted by Marie Oser