



Taken from: [www.organicfacts.net/health-benefits/vegetable/tomatoes.html](http://www.organicfacts.net/health-benefits/vegetable/tomatoes.html)

Tomatoes are considered both fruits and vegetables and form an integral part of cuisines all across the globe, especially in the Mediterranean region. Daily consumption of tomatoes provides a great boost to health, along with improving the flavor of food. You find tomatoes in countless different foods, including pastas, pizzas, ketchup, various beverages, and as an included flavor element in dishes from breakfast to dinner. Tomatoes are relatively easy to cultivate and grow very quickly, making them a quickly replaceable food source, which is a big reason why it is a staple food for many nations. Nowadays, tomatoes are grown in countries all around the world, and there are thousands of different cultivars and varieties of tomatoes that can provide you with unique health benefits.

### **Health Benefits**

#### **Abundant Source of Antioxidants:**

Tomato contains large amount of lycopene, an antioxidant that is highly effective in scavenging cancer causing free radicals. This benefit can even be obtained from heat-processed tomato products like ketchup. The lycopene in tomatoes defends against cancer and has been shown to be particularly effective in fighting prostate cancer, cervical cancer, cancer of the stomach and rectum as well as pharynx and esophageal cancers. It also protects against breast cancer and cancer of the mouth, according to studies published by the Harvard School of Public Health.

#### **Rich Source of Vitamins and Minerals:**

A single tomato can provide about 40% of the daily vitamin C requirement. Vitamin C is a natural antioxidant which prevents against cancer-causing free radicals from damaging the body's systems. It also contains abundant



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vitamin A and potassium, as well as iron. Potassium plays a vital role in maintaining nerve health and iron is essential for maintaining normal blood health. Vitamin K, which is essential in blood clotting and controls bleeding, is also abundant in tomatoes.

### **Reduces Cholesterol and Protects the Heart:**

The lycopene in tomatoes prevents serum lipid oxidation, thus exerting a protective effect against cardiovascular diseases. The regular consumption of tomatoes has been proven to decrease the levels of LDL cholesterol and triglycerides in the blood. These lipids are the key culprits in cardiovascular diseases and lead to the deposition of fats in the blood vessels.

### **Counters the Effect of Cigarette Smoke:**

The two main components of tomatoes, coumaric acid and chlorogenic acid, fight against nitrosamines which are produced in the body and are the main carcinogens found in cigarettes. The presence of vitamin A in such high quantities has also been shown to reduce the effects of carcinogens and can protect you against lung cancer.

### **Improves Vision:**

Vitamin A, present in tomatoes, aids in improving vision, as well as in preventing night-blindness and macular degeneration. Vitamin A is a powerful antioxidant that can be formed from an excess of beta-carotene in the body. A lot of vision problems occur due to the negative effects of free radicals, and vitamin A is a powerful antioxidant.

### **Digestive Health:**

Tomatoes keep the digestive system healthy by preventing both constipation and diarrhea. It also prevents jaundice and effectively removes toxins from the body. Furthermore, tomatoes have a large amount of fiber, which can bulk up stool and reduce symptoms of constipation. A healthy amount of fiber helps to stimulate peristaltic motion in the smooth digestive muscles, and also release gastric and digestive juices. This can regulate your bowel movements, thereby improving your overall digestive health and helping you avoid conditions like colorectal cancer.

### **Lowers Hypertension:**

Daily consumption of tomatoes reduces the risk of developing hypertension, also known as high blood pressure. This is partially due to the impressive levels of potassium found in tomatoes. Potassium is a vasodilator, meaning that it reduces the tension in blood vessels and arteries, thereby increasing circulation and lowering the stress on the heart by eliminating hypertension.

### **Manages Diabetes:**

A study conducted by the Journal of the American Medical Association shows that daily consumption of tomatoes reduces the oxidative stress of type 2 diabetes.

### **Healthy Skin:**

Tomatoes aid in maintaining healthy teeth, bones, hair and skin. Topical application of tomato juice is even known to cure severe sunburns. Daily consumption of tomatoes protects the skin against UV-induced erythema. Tomatoes rank high in the preparation of anti-aging products.



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### **Prevents Urinary Tract Infections:**

Tomato intake also reduces the incidence of urinary tract infections, as well as bladder cancer. This is because tomatoes are high in water content, which can stimulate urination, so tomatoes are a diuretic in certain ways. This increases the elimination of toxins from the body, as well as excess water, salts, uric acid, and some fat as well!

### **Prevents Gallstones:**

Regular consumption of tomatoes can also provide relief from gallbladder disease such as gallstones.