



## The Benefits of “Superfoods”

Most people are aware that the foods listed below are healthy in nature. But what are their health benefits? This tip outlines the benefits associated with seven “superfoods.” To help improve your family’s health and to help fight disease, UnitedHealthcare recommends adding them to your shopping list, and then serving on a regular basis.

### 1. Avocados

**Benefits:** Many people avoid avocados because they are high in fat. However, avocados can help reduce cholesterol, and decrease the risk of cancer and diabetes. They also contain antioxidants.

**Nutrients:** Vitamins E, C, K, and B6, potassium, fiber, and folate

**Recipe Tip:** Spread on toast and melt low-fat cheese on top. Add sliced tomato.

### 2. Apples

**Benefits:** Apples are loaded with antioxidants. They have vitamin C, which keeps your blood vessels healthy and helps you absorb iron. That means a reduced risk of cancer and heart disease, especially if you eat the skin.

**Nutrients:** Fiber and vitamin C

**Recipe Tip:** Chop and toss into a green salad.

### 3. Berries

**Benefits:** All berries are highly nutritious. Eating blueberries regularly may improve short-term memory and slow the aging process. Studies show that blueberries help fight cancer better than other fruits.

**Nutrients:** Fiber, vitamin C, vitamin K, and manganese

**Recipe Tip:** Mix with yogurt or cottage cheese. Add a small handful of crushed nuts.

### 4. Broccoli

**Benefits:** Broccoli is part of a family that includes spinach, cabbage, cauliflower, Brussels sprouts, kale, and collard greens. It is highly nutritious and may help prevent diabetes, heart disease, and some cancers.

**Nutrients:** Calcium, potassium, folate, fiber, iron, magnesium, phosphorus, B vitamins, vitamin C, vitamin K, and manganese

**Recipe Tip:** Sauté with a small amount of olive oil, garlic, and chicken broth.

### 5. Salmon

**Benefits:** Try to eat at least two fish meals per week. Fish contains heart-healthy omega-3 fats. Eating fish cuts your risks for heart disease, cancer, Alzheimer’s, stroke, diabetes, and arthritis. It may also help with depression.

**Nutrients:** B vitamins, phosphorus, protein, selenium, and omega-3 fats

**Recipe Tip:** If possible, choose wild salmon. It is less likely to contain chemicals like mercury. Brush fish with a mixture of orange juice and orange marmalade. Bake until done.

### 6. Beans (includes beans, split peas, and lentils)

**Benefits:** Beans provide energy that lasts for hours. They are high in fiber, which can lower your risk for heart disease and help you control blood sugar. They may also help fight cancer. All legumes, especially soy, are important in vegetarian diets because they are high in protein.

**Nutrients:** Fiber, vitamin B6, folate, manganese, protein, copper, iron, magnesium, phosphorus, potassium, thiamine, calcium and zinc

**Recipe Tip:** Add rinsed, canned beans to your favorite salad.

### 7. Walnuts/Almonds

**Benefits:** These nuts are packed with nutrients. They’re also good for your heart. The monounsaturated fat in almonds can help you lower your cholesterol if you substitute other fats for them. Walnuts have small amounts of omega-3 fat. Although nuts are high in fat and calories, they can actually help with weight loss. Their protein, fiber, and healthy fats provide a feeling of fullness, which can help you from overeating.

**Nutrients:** Magnesium, vitamin E, fiber, riboflavin, magnesium, iron, and calcium

**Recipe Tip:** Toast a whole-grain English muffin and spread with low-fat cream cheese. Top with a handful of crushed walnuts or slivered almonds.