

Grapes: Powerhouse Of Phytochemicals

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(NAPSA)—A trip to the produce department is an experience filled with wonderful colors, aromas and the anticipation of great tastes. This is guilt-free shopping at its best, secure in the knowledge that fruits and vegetables are full of vitamins, minerals and other “good for you” things.



Pivonka

Some of the newest reasons to pursue the “more is better” philosophy when shopping for produce are called phytochemicals. The colors and flavors of fruits and vegetables like those found in red, blue, green and purple grapes come from phytochemicals. Scientists also believe phytochemicals may help explain why people who eat diets high in fruits and vegetables are healthier.

Phytochemicals are compounds found only in plants. Many are powerful antioxidants that can mop up damaging byproducts of the body’s energy-producing process called oxidation.

Some phytochemicals appear to make blood less sticky, maintain the flexibility of blood vessels and slow down the oxidation of LDL cholesterol. All of which can help maintain a healthy heart and circulatory system.

Ways phytochemicals may protect against cancer are also being studied. They may neutralize cancer-causing agents as well as reverse the uncontrolled multiplication of some cancer cells.

What is the best way to capture the health benefits of phytochemicals in fruits and vegetables? Eating a variety of colorful fruits and vegetables every day is key. Each fruit and vegetable has a unique set of phytochemicals and nutrients that work together to promote health. Grapes, for instance, are one of the few sources of the phytochemical resveratrol, a potent antioxidant under study for its role in preventing heart disease and cancer. Grapes also have many other phytonutrients, and are a good source of vitamin C.

This delicious recipe lets you get your grapes and three other vegetables.



Photo and recipe credit: California Table Grape Commission.

Eating a variety of colorful fruits and vegetables every day can be a key to good health.

Balsamic Chicken Salad

Balsamic Mustard Dressing*

- 4 3-ounce boneless, skinless chicken breast
- 1 large sweet onion, cut into 12 wedges
- 2 quarts mixed salad greens
- 2 cups Welch’s Fresh (seedless) Grapes
- 2 tablespoons sliced fresh basil

*Balsamic Mustard Dressing Preparation:

Combine 1/3 cup balsamic vinegar, 1 tablespoon Dijon-style mustard, 1/4 teaspoon each seasoned salt and sugar and 1/8 teaspoon ground pepper. Makes about 1/3 cup.

Salad Preparation:

Pour 2 tablespoons Balsamic Mustard Dressing into a small bowl and brush chicken and onion wedges with it. Let brushed chicken and onion stand 5 minutes. Grill chicken until juices run clear. Grill onion wedges 3 to 5 minutes per side. Toss salad greens, grapes, grilled onion, basil and remaining Balsamic Mustard Dressing. Slice chicken and arrange over tossed green mixture. Makes 4 servings.

Nutrition Analysis Per Serving: Calories 227; Protein 21.0g; Fat 3.3g; Calories from Fat 12%; Carbohydrate 30.6g; Cholesterol 47mg; Fiber 4.7g; Sodium 319mg.

The recipe is from the California Table Grape Commission. Welch’s Fresh Grapes are from California May through December.

For more information, see: www.WelchsFresh.com, www.5aday.com or www.aboutproduce.com.



Note to Editors: Forty-fifth in a series of monthly 5-A-Day columns. For previous stories featuring other fruits and vegetables go to www.napsnet.com and search: “Pivonka.”