

Whether You Say Tomato Or “Tomahto,” Take Lycopene To Heart

(NAPSA)—A growing number of people are taking the nutrition and health of their family to heart by serving heart-healthy meals using ketchup, pasta sauce or other processed tomato products.

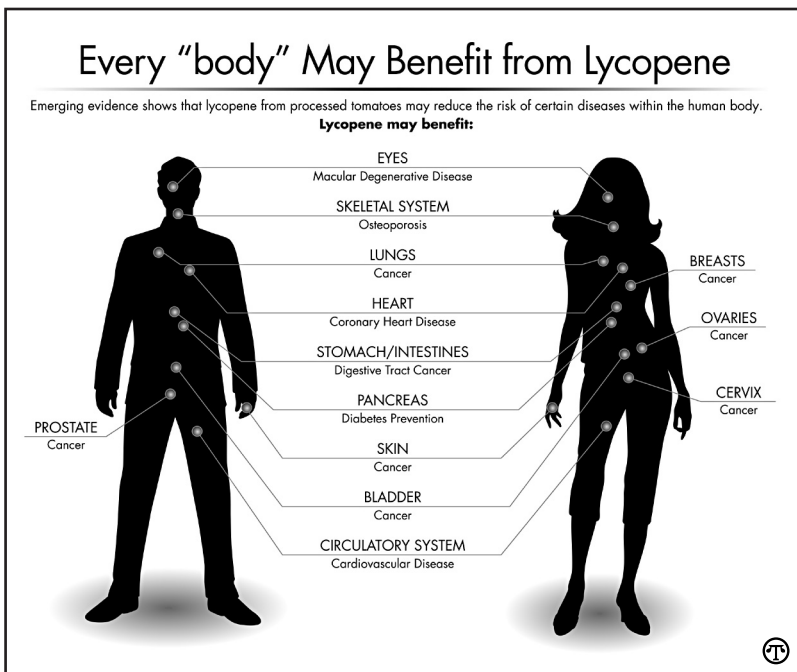
Why processed tomato products? Besides being favorites around the world, products such as ketchup, tomato sauce and other tomato-based foods are abundant sources of tomato lycopene—an antioxidant that research has shown may help reduce the risk of heart disease and other ailments.

According to a study commissioned by the H.J. Heinz Company, the public’s awareness of the benefits of tomato lycopene in a healthy diet is higher than ever before.

In 1998, an initial survey conducted by Heinz asked consumers if they were aware of lycopene, and only 6.5 percent of participants responded positively. The latest 2003 survey results show that 37.3 percent of people asked had heard of the antioxidant—a dramatic increase.

Results from Heinz’s most recent survey further revealed interesting information about functional foods, namely tomatoes. Functional foods are foods which, in addition to their nutritional function, may enhance health or prevent illness. Five years ago, only 9.3 percent of respondents polled had heard of functional foods. During this survey, that number increased to 11.1 percent.

Not only is there a growth in public awareness, but emerging evidence also shows that lycopene may reduce the risk of certain diseases other than heart disease. For instance, lycopene may aid in the fight against macular degenerative disease (eyes), osteoporosis (bone), diabetes (pancreas) and cancer (lungs, breasts, ovaries, cervix, prostate, stomach/intestines, skin and bladder).



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Research is ongoing, but the benefits of lycopene in tomatoes and other fruits and vegetables seem to increase with each new study. The biggest sources of lycopene in the North American diet are processed tomato products such as Heinz Tomato Ketchup, Classico Pasta Sauces, and tomato juice and sauce. The versatility and taste of these products allows for easy use and incorporation into any meal and diet. Absence may make the heart grow fonder, but lycopene may make the heart grow stronger ...and that is a reason to celebrate.

Heinz Ketchup Chicken Chili

- ½ lb. skinless, boneless chicken breasts cut into 1-inch pieces**
- ½ cup chopped green bell pepper**
- 1 15 oz. can kidney beans, drained**
- 1 cup low-sodium chicken broth**

- 1 tbsp. chili powder**
- ¾ cup chopped onion**
- 2 cloves minced garlic**
- 1 14½ oz. can diced tomatoes**
- ½ cup Heinz Tomato Ketchup**
- ⅛ tsp. crushed red pepper**

Spray medium saucepan with nonstick cooking spray. Cook the chicken breasts, cut into 1-inch pieces, chopped onions, chopped green bell pepper and minced garlic over medium-high heat until chicken is no longer pink, stirring constantly. Add the garbanzo or kidney beans, diced tomatoes, chicken broth, Heinz Tomato Ketchup, chili powder and crushed red pepper. Cover; simmer 10 minutes. Serve with sour cream, sliced green onions, shredded cheese and tortilla chips as desired.

Servings: 4
Calories: 234
Lycopene: 16.9 mg