

Franklin Jr./Sr High School Reading Article

What's So Super About Super Foods? American Heart Assoc.

Reading Strategy for the Article: Students will take turns reading aloud. Mark the text and write in the margins as you read. 1130L

<http://www.heart.org/HEARTORG/GettingHealthy/NutritionCenter/HealthyDietGoals/Whats-so-super-about>

Instructions: COMPLETE ALL QUESTIONS AND WRITE NOTES in the margin box. This requires reading of the article **more than once**.

Step 1: Skim the article using these symbols as you read:

(+) agree, (-) disagree, (*) important, (!) surprising, (?) wondering

Step 2: Number the paragraphs. **Read** the article **carefully** and **make notes in the margin**.

Notes should include:

- Comments that show that you **understand** the article. A summary or statement of the main idea of important sections may serve this purpose.
- Questions you have that show what you are **wondering** about as you read
- Notes that differentiate between **fact** and **opinion**.
- Observations about how the **writer's strategies** (organization, word choice, perspective, support) and choices affect the article.

Step 3: A final quick read noting anything you may have missed during the first two reads.

Your margin notes will be assessed by your teacher along with your answers to the questions.

What Makes Super Foods so Super?

American Heart Association 2013

You may have seen news reports, fad diets or ads touting the health benefits of the latest super food — everything from slowing aging to promoting weight loss. The glut of information can be overwhelming. So do superfoods really reduce the risk of heart disease and stroke?

The truth, said nutrition expert Penny Kris-Etherton, Ph.D., RD, is that many so-called "super" foods are good for your heart and your overall health when incorporated into a heart-healthy diet that's balanced in lean protein, whole grains, fruits, vegetables and low-fat milk and dairy products. This diet also should include nuts, seeds and legumes, fish and liquid vegetable oils.

There are no standard criteria or approved list of super foods, said Kris-Etherton, also Distinguished Professor of Nutrition at The Pennsylvania State University in University Park, Penn.

"Eating 'super foods' won't hurt you. Most are very healthy," Kris-Etherton said. "As a registered dietician, I'd like to see people eat more of the super foods like whole grains, legumes, nuts and seeds, fish, fatty fish and all fruits and veggies."

But are they really 'super'?

Most myths about super foods are perpetuated by marketing efforts, said Kris-Etherton, which is why most nutrition experts prefer not to use the term.

"A lot of people have unrealistic expectations about these foods, thinking they'll be protected from chronic diseases and health problems," she said. "They may eat one or two of these nutrient-dense foods on top of a poor diet."

Eating too much of one type of food may prevent you from getting the nutrients you need, Kris-Etherton said. According to the U.S. Department of Agriculture,

Notes on my thoughts, reactions and questions as I read.

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many people in the U.S. don't get enough of the potassium, dietary fiber, calcium and vitamin D found in fruits, vegetables, whole grains, milk and milk products.

In addition to essential vitamins and nutrients, many fruits, vegetables, nuts and seeds provide phytochemicals — chemical compounds found in plants — that may help reduce the risk of atherosclerosis, the buildup of fatty deposits in artery walls.

Research has shown that bioactive compounds in **dark chocolate** may have health benefits, but watch out for ingredients like sugar and fat that up the calories.

“Don't eat so much dark chocolate that you overshoot your daily calorie goal and gain weight,” said Kris-Etherton, who is also an American Heart Association volunteer.

The Skinny on Common Super Foods

- **Salmon** is a fatty fish that's low in saturated fat and high in omega-3 fatty acids, which can decrease the risk of abnormal heartbeats, reduce triglycerides (the chemical form of fats in most foods and in your body) and slow the growth of plaque in the arteries. The American Heart Association recommends eating at least two 3.5 ounce servings of fish a week.
- **Turkey** is a leaner substitute for beef that can be grilled, roasted or ground.
- **Nuts, legumes and seeds** are good sources of protein and polyunsaturated and monounsaturated fats when eaten in moderation. Choices include unsalted almonds, peanuts, pistachios and walnuts. The American Heart Association recommends getting four servings a week.
- **Berries** like blueberries and strawberries have high levels of phytochemicals called flavonoids. One study showed that women who consumed more blueberries and strawberries had a lower risk of heart attack. The American Heart Association recommends nine servings of fruits and vegetables a day, about 4.5 cups.
- **Soy** products like tofu, soy butter and soy nuts are high in polyunsaturated fat, fiber, vitamins and minerals but low in saturated fat. They could replace other high-fat proteins in the diet, although it's unknown exactly how soy affects heart disease risk factors.
- **Pumpkin** is low in calories, high in fiber and high in vitamin A.
- **Kale** provides vitamins A and C, potassium and phytochemicals.
- **Low-fat or nonfat yogurt**, which provides calcium, vitamin D and protein, can be a good substitute for sour cream in recipes.
- **Dark chocolate** is high in flavonoids, but fat and calories too! Treat yourself in moderation to avoid weight gain. One study showed dark chocolate was associated with lower heart failure risk.
- **Red wine** in moderation may have some health benefits, but the American Heart Association doesn't recommend drinking alcohol to get them. High alcohol consumption can have negative effects on health, such as increased triglyceride levels, high blood pressure, and liver damage.

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Comprehension Questions— you may answer in phrases.

1. What does **glut** mean as used in paragraph 1?
2. What does the word **touting** as used in paragraph 1 mean?
3. According to Kris Etherton, when are super foods actually good for you ?
4. Why is it dangerous to eat too much of any type of food?
5. What are *phytochemical* and how do they help you?.
6. How is dark chocolate both good and bad for you?

Answer the following questions in one or more complete sentences.

1. Explain why myths about super foods are perpetuated.
2. Select 3 of the super foods listed at the end of the article that you would be willing to eat moer reqlently. Then explain how each would improve your health.