

Nutritional Booster Foods

A booster food is a nutrient-packed food that can help your body fight disease, feel more energetic and help maintain weight. The four booster foods listed below are those that are must haves in any well stocked kitchen. As the name suggests, these are to be used as booster additions to a well balanced, whole food diet. If you are taking any medications you should check with your doctor before adding these into your diet.

Nutritional Yeast (savory yeast or nooch)

Aim to eat 2 Tbs a day.

Nutritional yeast is a great booster food for vegans and vegetarians as it offers a good non-animal source of B vitamins and complete protein. It has been show to support immunity, digestion, hair, skin and nails. Although salty in taste, it's low in sodium and fat. If you see B12 listed on the label, that means it has been fortified, because it is not produced organically as part of the growing process.

Eat some now: Sprinkle on anything that you would normally put cheese on: pasta, brown rice, salad, organic popcorn, kale chips, potatoes, roasted vegetables and soup.

Nutrition: (2 Tbs): 45 kcal, 4 g fiber, 8 g protein, 640% thiamin, 570% riboflavin, 280% niacin, 480% vitamin B6, 60% folate, 130% vitamin B12 (in fortified versions).

Flax Seeds (linseeds)

Take 1 Tbs of ground flaxseed 2 to 3 x a day.

Flax seeds are a great vegetarian source of omega-3 fatty acids and are touted as the richest non-animal source in the world! These seeds also offer a good boost of fiber, protein and antioxidants. Taking daily benefits the skin, hair promotes weight loss, improves digestion, lowers cholesterol, reduces sugar cravings, balances hormones and fights cancer.

Eat some now: Flax seeds are best consumed ground. Add to smoothies, cereal, homemade granola, bake into muffins and cookies, sprinkle on yogurt, oatmeal, applesauce or cottage cheese. Can also be use in baking as an egg substitute.

Nutrition: (1 Tbs): 37 calories, 3 g fat, 2 g fiber, 1 g protein, 8% thiamin, 19% manganese, 7% magnesium, 597mg Omega-3, 414mg and Omega-6. Trace amounts of riboflavin, niacin, pantothenic acid, calcium, iron, phosphorus, potassium, zinc, copper and fluoride.

Spirulina

Take up to 10 g a day, depending on support needs.

Spirulina is a blue-green algae that grows in fresh and saltwater. It is considered to be the most nutritious food on Earth. It supports immunity, digestion, helps to boost probiotics, offers a great vegetarian source of complete protein (more digestible than beef) and can reduce hunger and food cravings. It is also great for heart and liver health. When you exercise it protects against oxidative damage and helps to build muscle.

Eat some now: Source organic spirulina in powder or pill form. The powder form is easiest to take when added to smoothies. Start with a small dose and work your way up to the desired dosage.

Nutrition (1 Tbs / 7 g of dried spirulina powder): 25 calories, 4 g protein, 320% vitamin A, 20% Iron and 70% vitamin B12. Decent amounts vitamin E, vitamin D, B vitamins (B1, B2, B3, B6, and B9), magnesium, calcium, copper, potassium, selenium, iron, and zinc. B12 found in spirulina is not a replacement from animal sourced B12.

Sauerkraut

Aim to eat 4 Tbs per day.

Sauerkraut is a great non-dairy source of mega healthy natural probiotics. The active cultures created during the fermentation process help to balance the health of your digestive tract, which is tied to many aspects of your overall health. Fermented foods have been shown to support immunity as well as cognitive, digestive and endocrine functions. It also supports digestion, absorption of various nutrients, detoxifies the body and controls inflammation.

Eat some now: Source fresh organic refrigerated varieties in order to preserve the live and active cultures. Find in farmers markets, health food stores and even at some larger chain stores. Add as a condiment to your meals, on top of salads, breakfast scrambles, sandwiches or inside homemade nori rolls.

Nutrition (4 tablespoons) 15 calories, 1 g fiber, 330 mg sodium, 50% vitamin K, 35% vitamin C and small amounts of Vitamin A, Calcium, Iron and Folate. The most dominant bacteria in sauerkraut is from the Lactobacillus family, with L. Plantarum being the most abundant with smaller populations of L. Paraplantarum and L. Brevis.

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