



*Photos courtesy of Pixabay*

## EAT WELL, AGE WELL. PURPLE FOODS

Anthocyanins are part of the flavonoid family and are typically found in plant foods. They provide the bright red-orange to blue-violet colors of many fruits and veggies. Anthocyanins are most abundantly found in berries and their juices. Studies have found that consumption of foods with this compound aids in cardiovascular disease protection. One study of 34,489 postmenopausal women found a significant reduction in death from cardio vascular and coronary artery disease with those who consumed blueberries or strawberries once a week. Another study found an 8% decrease risk of developing high blood pressure by those who had an anthocyanin rich diet. This reduction might be partially caused by a decrease in arterial stiffness and blood pressure. Anthocyanins have also been shown to reduce the spread and increase cell death of cancerous cells. Lastly, research suggests that anthocyanins can aid in preventing age-related loss of mental functions and improve memory. These compounds are thought to improve blood flow in the brain, activate synaptic signaling, and decrease nerve inflammation. Anthocyanins can be found in a wide variety of fruits and vegetables. Plums, figs, blueberries, purple potatoes, red cabbage, blue corn, eggplant, and red onions are all options. Having frozen fruit on hand can also help to increase your purple food intake. A study from 2004 found no significant loss of anthocyanin levels in frozen, fresh, or dried berries. So, start small with some blueberries and work your way up to a purple food filled diet!

GWAAR Nutrition Team in Collaboration with UW Stout Dietetic Students Issue 6: 5-16-17 by Emily Parsons

### WEEKLY CHALLENGES

EAT BERRIES THREE  
TIMES THIS WEEK

TRY PURPLE  
POTATOES FOR  
DINNER

HAVE PURPLE  
CABBAGE AT LEAST  
ONCE THIS WEEK

TRY AN EGGPLANT  
RECIPE AND KEEP  
THE SKIN ON

**DID YOU KNOW?**  
ANTHOCYANIN-RICH  
FOODS AND  
SUPPLEMENTS HAVE  
BEEN LINKED TO  
LOWER CHOLESTEROL  
LEVELS AND REDUCED  
BLOOD CLOTTING

## Note to Nutrition Directors and Site Managers:

Thank you for helping to promote Eat Well, Age Well. Please encourage folks to form weekly action plans to help them incorporate nutrient dense foods into their eating habits. You can help create excitement to try new foods. They will find that they are really tasty and they will feel better if they add some of these foods to their diets.

If they ask how they should record if they reach their weekly action plan. They can write words like, "Nailed it" or just a short note like, added tomato juice at breakfast or added kale to my salad, etc.

### **Week 1:** Give out:

- The 1- page overview handout Eat Well, Age Well. Purple Foods.
- placemat/handout for *Fruit Salad*
- Table Tent #1: Purple Power (5x7)
- Give out the monthly calendar to track Weekly Challenges

### **Week 2:** Give out placemat/handouts for:

- *Purple Cabbage*
- Table Tent #2: Berries (5x7)

### **Week 3:** Give out placemat/handouts for:

- *Gazpacho*
- Table Tent #3: Purple Cabbage (5x7)

### **Week 4:** Give out placemat/handout:

- *Papaya*
- Table Tent #4: Eggplant & Red Onions (5x7)

**To print** the placemats on legal size paper, just hit print, they should be set up for that size of paper. To make them into a handout, go to Print and then go down to the last item that should say, 1 page per sheet, and click on the drop-down menu to select "Scale to Paper Size" and select "letter" size paper.

I appreciate your input and feedback so please feel free to call me at 608-228-8095 or email me with any comments [pam.vankampen@gwaar.org](mailto:pam.vankampen@gwaar.org)