



Tomato

Lycopene, Vitamins A,C,K, dissolves fat from food, good for artery health

Information: Herbals/Nutritionals/Medicinals can be very strong, consequently, if each one is not tailored to your specific needs, then you can risk more harm than good. This information is meant to be used by your VHC Medical Team and personal Physician as they build your Total Health Plan. Never attempt to adjust your prescribed medications and/or Natural Treatments without your physician's and Medical Team's knowledge and guidance. Since herbals/nutritionals and medications can interact with each other, it is always advisable to consult with your health care provider and The Vibrant Health Community at www.VibrantHealthCommunity.com (or call 1-866-378-8253) *before* starting/changing your program.

Botanical: *Lycopersicon lycopersicum*

Family: *Solanaceae* (nightshade)

Is it a vegetable or is it a fruit? Whatever it is, we do know that **Tomato** *is a great gift to good health*. It is loaded with nutrients - rich in vitamin C, beta-carotene and lycopene (a powerful antioxidant that protects against free radical damage to cells) - low in sodium and calories - and high in citric acid and potassium. This nutritious supplement is just too good to pass up. You already know how invaluable it is in the kitchen; *now you know the rest of the story!*

Tomato is an annual plant that is native to the Andean region of South America, and it grows with erect, hairy stems that become decumbent and woody, bearing pinnate leaves. The Tomato plant thrives in sandy, acidic, well-

drained soil and does not tolerate waterlogged soil or frost, and it loves sun and warm weather (the more sun, the more lycopene the fruit produces). Its origins are ambiguous, as some say the earliest tomatoes were first harvested by the Incas of the Andes, and others claim it was the Aztecs who first cultivated them around 700 A.D. Apparently, they were later carried to Europe by the Spanish conquistadors, and at the time, they were small, yellow fruits (about the size of today's cherry Tomatoes), but they were not very popular. They were suspected to be poisonous like other members of the nightshade family, but some of the problem may be traced to the fact that wealthy people ate from plates made of pewter, which contains lead, and foods with a high acid content (like

Tomatoes) would cause the lead to leech out into the food, resulting in lead poisoning and death. In contrast, poor people, who ate from wooden plates, did not have the problem nor the aversion to Tomatoes. This is essentially the reason why Tomatoes were eaten only by poorer populations until the 1800s (most notably Italians). Tomatoes were later reintroduced to America, where they were still regarded as suspicious, until the Creoles of New Orleans finally brought them into the kitchen in 1812. However, it was another fifty years, when there was a greater influx of foreign cultures into the United States, before it became widely used in the rest of the country.

There is a great deal of research being conducted in the medical community with regard to the antioxidant value of Tomato. In 1995, Harvard University claimed that a diet rich in Tomato products appeared to reduce the risk of prostate cancer, and according to the National Cancer Institute, a "preliminary investigation of twenty-one men with prostate cancer found that lycopene supplements appeared to reduce the uncontrolled growth of prostate cancer cells (proliferation) and restored normal cell turnover (apoptosis and differentiation)." There are other interesting developments on the horizon regarding the use of natural herbals in the fight against prostate cancer. In view of extensive research and articles released by the National Cancer Institute, the Prostate Cancer Foundation and the National Institute of Health, Lycopene is currently considered one of the most "prostate-healthy" and efficient carotenoids for protecting against cancers and an exceptional antioxidant that shields against cell-damaging free radicals. According to an article released in May, 2006, a new study, published in the journal, *Urological Oncology*, reported that researchers, led by Nayan Mohanty from VM Medical College and Safdarjang Hospital in New Delhi, noted that blood levels of prostate-specific antigen (PSA), a protein that is used as a marker for the disease [prostate cancer], decreased by forty-two percent after supplementation. "This initial small trial has shown that Lycopene is an effective chemopreventive agent in preventing HGPIN from becoming prostate cancer," said Mohanty.

Botanically speaking, the Tomato is classified as a fruit, but this fruit was actually ruled by the United States Supreme Court in 1893 as an official vegetable. Although considered a fruit, it is most often used as a vegetable and consumed more than any other single fruit or vegetable worldwide. Some of the constituents in Tomato include beta-carotene, lycopene, niacin, magnesium, potassium, glucose, amino acids, protein and vitamins A, C and K.

Beneficial Uses: Tomato is *loaded* with nutrients - vitamins and minerals - and the all-important lycopene, one of the lesser-known carotenoids (that gives the Tomato its pigment). It is not produced by the body and must be acquired as a supplement to the diet and appears to be an exceptional antioxidant that helps to protect cells against oxidative damage. During normal cellular processes, extra oxygen atoms, or free radicals, are often produced and are used by the body to destroy foreign invaders like bacteria. However, if these free radicals are allowed to roam unchecked, they can cause cellular DNA to break down, mutating the cells and transforming normal cells into unhealthy cells. Antioxidants such as Lycopene mop up free radicals and thereby might contribute to protecting cells and tissue from free radical invasion and damage. According to the National Institute of Health, Lycopene is currently considered one of the most efficient carotenoids at protecting against free radicals that damage critical parts of the cell, including lipids, membrane lipoproteins, proteins and DNA.

Tomato is also believed to stimulate the liver in its function as a filter for body wastes and to help remove toxic waste products from the system. In the old Soviet Union, doctors often prescribed Tomato to factory workers who were exposed to toxic chemical occupational environments. It is thought that the reason was due to the fact that Tomatoes contain two very important detoxifying trace elements, i.e., chlorine and sulfur. Natural chlorine is said to help stimulate liver function, and the sulfur is said to protect the liver from cirrhosis and other liver problems.

Tomato is said to be good when eating too much animal fat in the form of butter, cheese, eggs, pork, beef and deep-fried foods by helping to dissolve fat; this may be a reason why Tomato is considered helpful for promoting healthy coronary function and reducing hardening of the arteries. In 1940, studies in Cornell University reported that Tomato stabilized and gave form and consistency to feces in animals and thus might be helpful in cases of diarrhea. Tomato is thought to be a good protein supplement for athletes and may even help to combat fatigue.

Contraindications:

Currently, there are no known warnings or contraindications with the use of Tomato.