

Tip Sheet

Nutrients and Prevention of Common Eye Diseases



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Research suggests that various nutrients may be protective against common eye diseases.

- Cataract: Vitamins A, C and E, beta-carotene, zinc, lutein, zeaxanthin
- Diabetic retinopathy: Soy protein, chromium, folic acid, isoflavones, magnesium, vitamins C and E, and zinc
- Glaucoma: Flavinoids in coffee, tea and red wine; anthocyanisides in blueberries and bilberries; magnesium supplements; dark chocolate; omega-3 fatty acids; coenzyme Q10; melatonin; and vitamins E, B2 and A
- Age-related macular degeneration: Lutein and/or zeaxanthin, fish, omega-3 fatty acids, nuts, monounsaturated fats, folic acid, pyridoxine, cyanocobalamin; reduced intake of linoleic acid

Sources of eye protective nutrients:

Vitamin A/beta-carotene	Organ meats, carrots, sweet potatoes, pumpkin, dark-green vegetables, carrots
Vitamin B2	Green leafy vegetables, lean meats, nuts, eggs, legumes, fortified cereals
Vitamin B6/pyridoxine	Fortified cereals, potatoes, bananas, nuts, cereals
Vitamin B12/cobalamine	Liver, clams, fortified cereals, seafood, fish
Vitamin C	Peppers, citrus fruits, kiwi, strawberries
Vitamin E	Fortified cereals, sunflower seeds, nuts,

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	turnip greens, tomato pastes and sauces
Antioxidants	Foods with vitamins A, C, and E and selenium
Chromium	Onions, tomatoes, whole grains, bran cereals, potatoes, oysters
Coenzyme Q10	Sardines, mackerel, meat, eggs, broccoli
Copper	Liver, turnip greens
Folic acid	Fortified cereals, spinach, asparagus
Isoflavones	Soy products
Linoleic acid	Fish, organ meats
Lutein/zeaxanthin	Eggs, green vegetables
Magnesium	Pumpkin seeds, bran, halibut, spinach, nuts
Omega-3 fatty acids	Leafy green vegetables, nuts, vegetable oils, including soy, flaxseed, and canola
Polyphenolic flavinoids	Citrus, tea, wine, dark chocolate
Selenium	Cereals, meat, eggs, tuna
Zinc	Oysters, crab, meat, fortified cereal

Reference:

Sharts-Hopko, N.C. (2010). Lifestyle strategies for the prevention of vision loss. *Holistic Nursing Practice*, 24(5), 284-291.