What are phytonutrients?

Phyto-what nows? Let’s talk about these fascinating chemicals, why they’re beneficial, and what foods contain them.

**Phyto = Plant**

“Phyto” comes from the Greek word for “plant,” so phytonutrients are literally “plant nutrients.” 😎🌱

Phytonutrients, also known as phytochemicals, may help prevent diseases and keep the body healthy. Phytonutrients are found in *fruits, vegetables, whole grains, nuts, beans,* and *tea leaves.*

**Just to name a few...**

**Carotenoids**
- Alpha-carotene, Beta-carotene,
- Beta-cytoxanthin,
- Lycopene, Lutein, Zeaxanthin

**Flavonoids**
- Catechins, Hesperidin
- Flavonols, Anthocyanins,
- Anthoxanthins

**Glucosinolates**
- Resveratrol
- Ellagic acid

**Common Functions**

- Serve as antioxidants that fight harmful cells (*carotenoids, ellagic acid, resveratrol, flavonoids*)
- May slow and prevent the growth of certain cancers (*lycopene, ellagic acid, catechins, flavonols, glucosinolates*)
- May reduce inflammation and prevent chronic disease (*hesperidin, flavonols, resveratrol*)
- Promote eye health (*lutein, zeaxanthin*)

**A Few Food Sources**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Alpha and Beta-Carotene</th>
<th>Pumpkins, Carrots</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lycopene</td>
<td>Tomatoes, Watermelon, Pink Grapefruit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lutein and Zeaxanthin</td>
<td>Spinach, Kale, Collards, Whole Grains</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ellagic Acid</td>
<td>Strawberries, Raspberries, Pomegranates</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resveratrol</td>
<td>Red Grapes, Peanuts, some Berries</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Catechins</td>
<td>Beans, Black Grapes, Apricots, Strawberries, Green Tea</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hesperidin</td>
<td>Oranges, Grapefruit, Lemons</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flavonols</td>
<td>Apples, Onions, Cherries, Beans, Kale, Broccoli, Berries</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Note:** Does it seem like we left things out? This is a tiny taste of the world of phytonutrients - there are THOUSANDS!

*Click here to read more from Oregon State University’s Linus Pauling Institute*