

Nutrient-obsessed people won't benefit from whittling food choices down to just blueberries and salmon. To gain the most bang from your whole-foods buck, build in variety and take advantage of whole-food synergies: Some whole foods partner to help the body absorb nutrients better than if you'd eaten them solo.

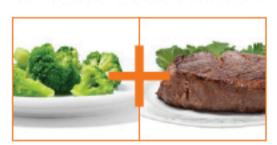
A classic example of food synergy is tomato sauce and olive oil. Tomatoes are rich in lycopene, a powerful phytochemical, but the body needs fat to absorb it. So take a page from Italian Cooking 101 and make your favorite tomato sauce using olive oil as your healthy fat.

Here are a few other pairings to keep in mind:



GREEN TEA + LEMON

Ascorbic acid in citrus fruits like lemons helps the body better absorb the antioxidant catechin found in green tea.



BROCCOLI + STEAK

Vitamin C in broccoli helps the body absorb the heme iron found in meat.



AVOCADO + MIXED GREENS

The good fat in avocados helps the body absorb phytochemicals from leafy greens.



SPINACH + TOFU

The vitamin K in spinach helps the body absorb the calcium in tofu.



RAISINS + DARK CHOCOLATE

The boron in raisins helps the body absorb more magnesium from chocolate.