

# Nutrition fact sheet



**A**vocados are naturally rich in monounsaturated fat and omega-3 fatty acids—“good fats”—that can help protect against heart disease. New research also suggests that avocados may help your body absorb and use important nutrients like carotenoids.

## Boost Nutrient Absorption with Avocados

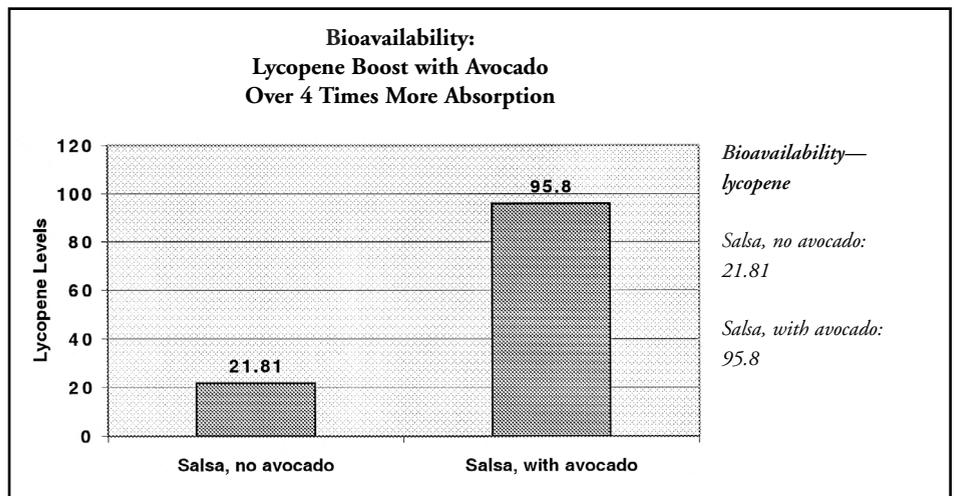
### *Boost Your Nutrients*

Carotenoids are powerful antioxidants that help protect the body from damaging compounds. They have also been shown to promote healthy vision. Carotenoids like alpha-carotene, beta-carotene, lutein, and lycopene are found in red, yellow, and orange fruits, and dark green leafy vegetables.

Dietary fats play an important role in the body's absorption of carotenoids. However, many fruits and vegetables rich in carotenoids are also fat-free. This may limit the body's ability to absorb some of these nutrients.

Research suggests that the natural “heart healthy” fat found in avocados increases the body's ability to absorb and use carotenoids.

A recent study reported that avocados, added to salad and salsa act as a nutrient boost by increasing carotenoid absorption. In the study, people who consumed salad containing 75g of avocado (equivalent to half of a medium avocado) absorbed 8 times more alpha-carotene, 13 times more beta-carotene, and 4 times more lutein. In addition, people who consumed salsa with 150g (equivalent to 1 medium avocado) of avocado absorbed



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4 times more lycopene, which has been linked to prostate cancer protection.

Ounce for ounce, nutrient dense avocados provide more fiber, magnesium, potassium, glutathione (a phytochemical that acts as an antioxidant), B-vitamins, vitamin E, vitamin K, zinc, and iron, than any other commonly eaten fruit.

### *Enjoy Ripe Avocados*

**Ripening:** Store avocados in a fruit bowl on the kitchen counter. To accelerate ripening, place avocados in a paper bag with an apple for 2 to 3 days at room temperature. When they darken and yield to gentle pressure, they're ready to eat.

### **Tips for Handling:**

1. Like all fruits and vegetables, wash the ripe avocado before cutting.
2. Cut the avocado length-wise around the seed.
3. Twist the halves in opposite directions to separate.
4. Slip a spoon between the seed and the fruit and work the seed out.
5. Slip a spoon between the skin and fruit and scoop away from the peel.

### **Storage Tips:**

Ripe avocados can be stored in a refrigerator or freezer for later use as a spread for sandwiches—or for a tasty dip.

- Simply mash the remaining fruit in a covered storage container.
- Add ½ teaspoon lemon juice per ½ mashed avocado to prevent discoloration and enhance flavor.
- Lay plastic wrap directly on the surface of the mixture before covering. Refrigerate a maximum of two days.
- Label container and use within two months if you store it in a freezer.

Avocados fit into delicious dishes including salads, salsas and soups. Create healthy avocado salsa for a festive appetizer and benefit from a nutrient boost.

### *Authentic Avocado Salsa*

(Makes 12 servings)

- 2 ripe avocados, seeded and peeled
- 1 Tablespoon fresh lime juice
- ⅓ cup diced tomato, seeded and well drained
- ¼ cup chopped green onion
- 1 serrano chili, chopped and seeded
- ¼ cup cilantro, chopped
- ½ teaspoon salt



### **Preparation:**

Cut avocados into ½-inch cubes. Stir in lime juice. Fold in remaining ingredients. Salsa is best made as close to serving as possible. For short-term storage, seal in an airtight container with a piece of plastic wrap against the surface of the salsa. Serve with crudites or baked tortilla chips.

### **Nutrients per serving (1 serving = 3 Tbsp):**

Calories 50; total fat 4.5g (saturated fat 1.0g; polyunsaturated fat 1.0g; monounsaturated fat 2.5g); protein 1g; total carbohydrates 4g; dietary fiber 3g; cholesterol 0mg; sodium 100mg; vitamin A 4%DV; vitamin C 40%DV; calcium 0%DV; iron 0%DV