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For the health knowledge of all Sri Lankans around the world.

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HEALTH & VIEWS

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JUNE 1st issue 2025

VACD Australia & Sri Lanka June 2025 Newsletter

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Collected by Dr Harold Gunatillake-

Are your fruits and vegetables diminishing in nutritional value?

"Multiple studies have reported a measurable decline in the nutrient content of fruits, vegetables and grains over the past several decades," Nicole Avena, a nutrition researcher and associate professor of neuroscience at Mount Sinai The School of Medicine, as told to Yahoo Life.

In recent decades, scientific research has revealed a concerning trend: the fruits and vegetables we consume today contain fewer nutrients than those eaten by previous generations. (Veggie lovers and health fanatics, avert your eyes now.) This decline in nutritional value is attributed to several factors, including modern agricultural techniques, environmental changes, and post-harvest handling methods.

Understanding these contributing elements is particularly crucial for populations in areas where nutrient deficiencies are already widespread. In this gallery, we explore the path to achieving better nutrition from our crops.

One of the main objectives of modern agriculture has been to increase crop yields to meet the demands of a growing global population. While this approach has successfully boosted food production, it has also led to a decrease in nutritional quality.



The "dilution effect"

Studies indicate an inverse relationship between crop yield and mineral concentrations, referred to as the "dilution effect." As crop yields increase, essential nutrients such as calcium, iron, and vitamins become less concentrated.

Mounting evidence shows that many of today's whole foods aren't as packed with vitamins and ...

As you gaze across the rows of brightly colored fruits and vegetables in the produce section of the grocery store, you may not be aware that the nutritional content of these crops has been declining over the past 70 years.

Mounting evidence from multiple scientific studies shows that many fruits, vegetables, and grain...

Nutrient decline "is going to leave our bodies with fewer of the components they need to mount defenses against chronic diseases—it's going to undercut the value of food as preventive medicine," says David R. Montgomery, a professor of geomorphology at the University of Washington.

See more on nationalgeographic.com

[Videos of Are Your Fruits and Vegetables Diminishing In Nutritiona...](#)

9 reasons to eat bananas every day

Story by Huong Duong



Bananas—which are rich in potassium, support digestion, boost energy and mood, and are good for the skin and bones—can enhance health when included in your daily diet.

Bananas are not only delicious but also packed with vitamins, minerals, and fiber, promoting overall health. Here are the benefits of incorporating bananas into your daily diet, according to *Times of India*:

1. Regulating blood pressure

Bananas are an excellent source of potassium, which helps regulate blood pressure by counteracting the effects of sodium. This compound reduces the risk of hypertension and supports overall heart health.

According to health news platform *WebMD*, a medium banana contains approximately 450 milligrams of potassium, which constitutes about 10% of the daily potassium intake recommended for an average adult.

2. Improving digestive function

The fiber in bananas aids in digestion by promoting regular bowel movements and preventing constipation. Pectin, a type of fiber found in bananas, supports smooth digestive function, improving gut health and reducing bloating.

3. Providing energy

Bananas quickly provide a source of natural energy due to their carbohydrate content, including monosaccharides like glucose and fructose, as well as the disaccharide sucrose. This makes bananas an [excellent pre- or post-workout snack](#) to help replenish energy.

Bananas make an excellent pre- or post-workout energy. Illustration photo by Pixabay

4. Improving mood

Bananas contain tryptophan, an amino acid that the body converts into serotonin, a neurotransmitter associated with feelings of well-being. This can help improve mood and reduce symptoms of depression and anxiety, contributing to overall mental health.

5. Benefiting the heart

In addition to potassium, [bananas](#) contain antioxidants and vitamins that support cardiovascular health. The high fiber content in bananas can help lower cholesterol levels, reducing the risk of heart disease and stroke over time.

6. Improving bone health

Bananas are rich in essential vitamins and minerals, including vitamin C and manganese, which are crucial for maintaining bone health. They aid in collagen production and strengthen bones, potentially reducing the risk of osteoporosis and fractures.

7. Benefiting people with diabetes

The fiber in bananas, particularly pectin, helps slow the absorption of sugar into the bloodstream. This stabilizes blood sugar levels, making bananas suitable for people with diabetes or those looking to manage their blood sugar levels.

8. Improving skin health

Bananas are a source of vitamins A, C, and E, known for being [beneficial for the skin](#). These nutrients help maintain healthy skin, reduce signs of aging, and improve skin texture and moisture.

9. Hydrating the body

With their high water content, bananas help keep the body hydrated. Proper hydration is essential for various bodily functions, including maintaining healthy skin, supporting digestion, and ensuring cellular function and overall energy levels.

10 Foods That Are Good for Your Gut

From probiotic-packed yogurt to high-fiber whole grains, discover how certain foods can help promote digestion, improve gut bacteria, and even help you lose weight.

The Best Time to Eat Breakfast for Overall Health



Eating breakfast early can have a significant impact on weight control, blood sugar regulation, and heart health.

Research suggests that the timing of your first meal plays a crucial role in how efficiently your body burns calories.

Early breakfast can promote weight loss.

Consuming most of your daily calories earlier in the day can aid in weight management, as your body metabolises food more efficiently in the morning.

A consistent breakfast routine is beneficial.

Eating breakfast at the same time each day helps regulate appetite, improve metabolism, and create a stable eating pattern.

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Eating breakfast at the same time each day helps regulate appetite, improve metabolism, and create a stable eating pattern.

Intermittent fasting should align with your rhythm

If you follow an intermittent fasting regimen, it may be more beneficial to eat earlier in the day rather than delay meals until later.

Protein is essential for breakfast.

A high-protein breakfast supports muscle growth, provides sustained energy, and keeps you full longer. Good options include eggs, Greek yogurt, and tofu.

Avoid processed carbs in the morning.

Sugary cereals, white bread, and pastries can lead to rapid spikes in blood sugar, followed by energy crashes and increased cravings.

The best time to eat breakfast

Your body is most insulin-sensitive in the morning, meaning it can process carbohydrates more effectively before 8:30 AM.

A late breakfast may increase the risk of heart disease.

Studies suggest that people who eat breakfast after 9:00 AM have a higher risk of cardiovascular disease compared to early eaters.

Late eating may lead to fat storage. As the day progresses, your body's ability to burn calories decreases, making late-night meals more likely to be stored as fat.

Breakfast is not necessary for everyone.

While early breakfast has many benefits, it doesn't work for everyone. The key is to listen to your body and eat when it feels right for you.

This article is based on information from [TODAY](#).

5 Reasons You Should Switch To Almond Milk



Almond milk is a delicious, dairy-free alternative to regular milk, offering a range of health benefits. Almond milk is low in calories, making it ideal for individuals seeking to reduce their calorie intake or lose weight. However, it's important to choose unsweetened almond milk, as some flavored varieties contain more calories. Almond milk contains no animal products, making it ideal for individuals who are lactose intolerant or following a vegan diet. One cup of almond milk contains 110% of the recommended daily intake of vitamin E. Vitamin E is an antioxidant that can reduce the risk of heart disease and some types of cancer. Compared to regular milk, almond milk has a much lower amount of saturated fat. It also contains a high amount of omega-3 fatty acids, which help prevent high blood pressure. Almond milk can be added to your cereal or coffee, mixed into smoothies, or used in recipes for soups and sauces.

Common mistakes made at night could increase the risk of cancer-related mortality.

Wake up feeling as fresh as a daisy? What if the solution for waking up quickly and feeling great in the morning lies in the regularity of our sleep pattern rather than its duration?

According to a study published in the journal *Sleep*, having a regular sleep routine reduces the risk of mortality from all causes. A total of 60,000 people participated in the study. By analysing the sleep habits of these candidates, researchers found that participants with more regular sleep patterns had a 20% to 48% reduced risk of mortality from all causes. These findings are consistent with other studies on the subject, as reported by Futura-sciences.

The researchers highlighted another essential factor: regular sleep is associated with a 22% reduction in the risk of cardiometabolic diseases and a 16% to 39% reduction in cancer-related mortality. Regardless of gender, origin, age, lifestyle, and other factors, these results remain valid.- ctd next column

Is Eating An Early Dinner Healthier?



Eating dinner earlier has become popular, partly due to changes in restaurant hours. However, research suggests that an early dinner may also be healthier, particularly for individuals with type 2 diabetes. Late-night dinners can negatively impact glycemic control and contribute to obesity. Eating a bigger meal earlier in the day has shown positive effects on short-term weight loss. However, finding the best dinner time depends on individual factors, and there is no one-size-fits-all approach. Considering your natural sleep cycle and aiming for regular meal times is beneficial for gut health. Allow a few hours between dinner and bedtime to facilitate digestion and promote better sleep. While trying an early dinner can be helpful, it's essential to consult with a healthcare provider before making significant changes to your diet.

Create a nighttime routine-continuing

Beyond the number of hours spent in bed, the key to greater longevity and better health lies in the regularity of our sleep and the nighttime routine we establish.

Furthermore, the study confirms that excesses are not the solution. Sleeping more than nine hours or less than six hours per night increases the risk of mortality, notes Futura-sciences.

(MH with Raphaël Liset - Source: Futura-sciences - Illustration: ©Unsplash)

Is Organic Always Better? What You Need to Know

Organic food is grown without synthetic pesticides, fertilizers, and other additives. But is it better for you? The answer might surprise you.

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Your Ultimate High-Fiber Grocery List

Fiber can help cut your “bad” cholesterol, aid in digestion, and keep you feeling full. The next time you go shopping, stock up on these healthy fiber options from every aisle.

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The Best Foods for a Good Night’s Rest

Certain foods, like cherries and nuts, are rich in melatonin and can help regulate your sleep cycle. See what you should be eating.

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The Keys to Staying Fit After 50

Looking for ways to keep fit -- mentally and physically -- as you age? Follow these tips for exercising smarter, eating better, and enjoying life.

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This Might Be Why Your Teeth Are So Sensitive

Here's what you need to know about common culprits like eating acidic foods and brushing too hard, and what you can do about them.

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Mediterranean diet may help lower breast cancer risk, especially postmenopause

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High Blood Pressure, Diabetes More Fatal For Men
Common Diabetes Drug Effective Against Knee Arthritis Pain

17 Signs of a Hormone Imbalance

Weight changes, belly problems, and brain fog are a few of the red flags that could mean your hormones are out of whack.

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Is It a Kidney Stone or Something Else?

The pain of kidney stones has been compared to childbirth. Find out why you get them, whether they're preventable, and how they're treated.

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18 Secrets to a Longer Life

As you age, you're more likely to get sick. But lifestyle changes like these healthy habits may slow aging at the cellular level.

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Fixes for 14 Everyday Aches and Pains

From sprains to sciatica, toothaches to tendinitis, our bodies can hurt in all kinds of ways. See how to treat what’s ailing you.

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