

What is Lycopene?

Lycopene is a bright red carotenoid pigment, a phytochemical found in tomatoes and other red fruits. Lycopene is the most common carotenoid in the human body and is one of the most potent carotenoid antioxidants. www.lycopene.com

The major carotenoids in the human body include: beta-carotene, alpha-carotene, cryptoxanthin, lutein, zeaxanthin and lycopene. Various studies show that lycopene makes up at least 50 percent of the carotenoids in the human body, accentuating its importance. These carotenoids are specifically broken down by the body, often during the process of absorption into the bloodstream from the small intestine. They make their way to specific tissues and organs where they have been shown to protect against the type of oxygen damage that can harm your dna. www.lycopene.com

Where To Find Lycopene

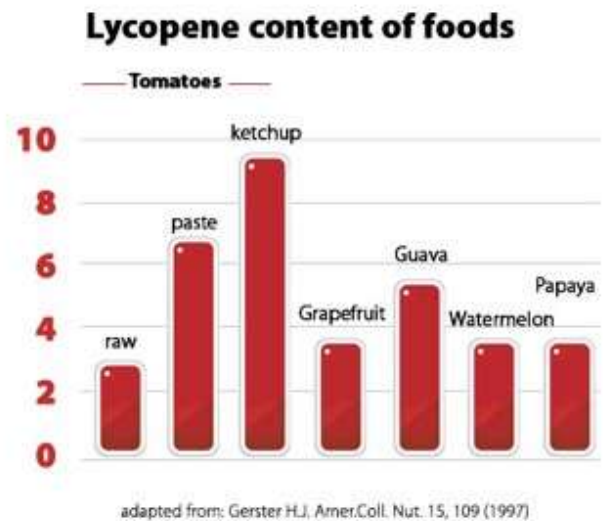
Fruits and vegetables that are high in lycopene include tomatoes, watermelon, pink grapefruit, pink guava, papaya, gac, and rosehip. Unlike other fruits and vegetables, where nutritional content such as vitamin C is diminished upon cooking, processing of tomatoes increases the concentration of bioavailable lycopene. Lycopene in tomato paste is four times more bioavailable than in fresh tomatoes. Thus processed tomato products such as pasteurized tomato juice, soup, sauce, and ketchup contain the highest concentrations of bioavailable lycopene. www.lycopene.com

Cooking and crushing tomatoes (as in the canning process) and serving in oil-rich dishes (such as spaghetti sauce and pizza) greatly increases assimilation from the digestive tract into the bloodstream. Lycopene is fat-soluble, so the oil is said to help absorption. www.lycopene.com

“Cooking tomatoes in oil encourages intestinal absorption and results in a two-to-threefold rise in plasma lycopene concentrations,” states Dr. Giovannucci.

”Tomato sauce is one of the best lycopene sources”

Processing Effects On Lycopene Content And Antioxidant Activity Of Tomatoes.



Consumption of tomato products has been associated with decreased risk of some cancer types, and the tomato antioxidant, lycopene, is thought to play an important role in the observed health effects. In this study, four carotenoids, trans-lycopene, phytofluene, phytoene, and zeta-carotene, were quantified in tomato products. www.lycopene.com