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Get The Scoop On Avocados

"Fats" don't need to be a four letter word in your healthy eating vocabulary. Avocados are a source of healthy monounsaturated fats. But there are many other nutrients packed in their creamy, green flesh. For instance:

- ❄ **Cholesterol-lowering plant sterols.** Avocados contain more of certain types of these compounds than any other food.
- ❄ **Fiber.** This essential nutrient promotes healthy weight, good digestion and steady blood sugar. Half an avocado has almost as much as a full cup of cooked barley.
- ❄ **Minerals.** Potassium helps control blood pressure, while magnesium regulates muscle and nerve function.
- ❄ **Vitamins C and E.** These antioxidants fight cancer and keep blood vessels clear.
- ❄ **Lutein and zeaxanthin.** You'll see more clearly with these healthy-eye compounds.
- ❄ *And about those healthy fats:* They also help you absorb other nutrients. In another recent study, people who paired tomato sauce or carrots with fresh sliced avocado or with guacamole absorbed more vitamin A from their meals.

Brown Guacamole Is the Pits
Frustrated by how quickly your guac turns brown? **Try this trick from Bon Appetit:** Put your fresh guacamole in a container with a tight-fitting lid then push the guacamole down into the container to get rid of any air pockets. Pour 1/2 inch of lukewarm water on top, seal the container, and refrigerate. When you're ready to eat, pour out the water and stir the guacamole. Guacamole may stay green for up to three days.

Just Add Avocado
Here are some other ways to incorporate avocados into your diet:

- ❄ Layer slivered avocados on sandwiches
- ❄ Cook them up with eggs
- ❄ Toss avocados in a salad with grapefruit, watercress and cashews
- ❄ Mash and spread them on toast
- ❄ Blend avocados with frozen raspberries in a smoothie
- ❄ Serve them stuffed with cooked crabmeat, low-fat mayo and plain yogurt, spiced with garlic and cayenne

Sources: *Epicurious.com; American Heart Association*