

## The Complicated world of Fruit

By: Andrew Clauser

The quote “An apple a day keeps the doctor away” never gets old and still holds true for the most part. Likewise with vegetables we are called to eat fruit as part of a healthy and well-balanced diet. But is it possible that fruit can actually prevent us from losing weight? You bet! Now before you roll your eyes at another Andrewism of Nutrition note that fruit needs to be eaten but eaten in moderation as compared to eating vegetables. I will also label the fruits that one should eat more of yet in moderation.

The bad: First, it’s important to know that the type of naturally occurring sugar in fruit is fructose. Fructose is a simple sugar which makes it significantly more readily absorbed in our blood causing a substantial spike in blood sugar. Also, your liver which processes the sugar actually transform fructose into triglycerides more readily than other sugar forms. When your blood receives excess triglycerides it interferes with the hormone, Leptin, which regulates hunger. This interference causes the body to crave more sugar either in fruit or carbohydrate form. This excess of triglycerides coming from excess fructose is going to be stored into the fat cells more than muscle cells. Combine that with our obsession of starches and grains. Here lies the common vegetarian problem. Vegetarians traditionally consume more fruit than the meat-eaters along with other grains and starches therefore are more apt to storing fat. There is nothing wrong with that lifestyle especially if its cultural but you can see the paradox that lies here. Excessive fructose consumption is linked to fatigue, diabetes, insulin resistance, and high blood pressure which is why fruits should be eaten in moderation.

And now the good: It is not all bad with fruit. Most fruits especially berries contain crazy amounts of antioxidants which are well known to fight and prevent cancers as well as other conditions and diseases. They are loaded with vitamins and minerals that are necessary for the body systems especially the immune system. Also, a lot of fruits have a lot of soluble fiber which is crucial for healthy digestion. Some fruits are better on the glycemic index than others combined with different amounts of antioxidants. The list is my personal list gathered from numerous sources that rank fruits that are high in antioxidants and low on the glycemic scale. Here are the rules for food consumption:

1. Eat fruit in moderation (1-2 servings per day, never more than three)
2. If you do consume eat the best ones available per the list below.
3. Try to eat fruit in its natural season. Seasonal fruits are significantly healthier than fruits shipped across the globe into our stores.
4. Unless it has a thick inedible shell (avocado, bananas) eat organic and even better, go local!
5. Grow your own fruits or go to a local farmer or co-op program.

The List: (Notes: Eat 4-10 in extreme moderation)

1. All Berries
2. Avocado

3. Tomato
4. Most pitted fruits like cherries, peaches, and apricots
5. Lemons and limes
6. Kiwi
7. Apples
8. Grapefruit
9. Bananas
10. Pomegranates