

6 'Unhealthy Foods' That Are Actually Good For You

It turns out that many of the foods we've been told for decades to avoid have actually gotten a bad nutritional rap. One-time bad guys such as eggs, coffee and even salt are now being shown in studies to be beneficial in moderate amounts.

Here are six "unhealthy" foods and beverages that actually are good for you:

1. Coffee. While coffee can cause heartburn, gastro-esophageal reflux (GERD), and aggravate irritable bowel syndrome, studies have shown that it may improve brain health, and help ward off dementia. A recent study even shows that it may protect the liver from the effects of alcohol.

Drinking coffee black or with a little almond milk instead of adding sugar or creamer is best, says Joseph J. Colello, M.D., author of the new book "Appetite Solution: Achieve the Metabolism of a Teenager."

"Stick to no more than two eight-ounce cups a day that you drink before noon, so the caffeine doesn't keep you awake at night," Dr. Colello tells *Newsmax Health*.

2. Popcorn. Homemade popcorn is an inexpensive, low-calorie whole-grain food snack. Just be sure avoid dousing it with high-calorie toppings. Instead of butter, try flavoring with a little extra virgin olive oil. Many people love it.

3. Potatoes. We've been told to ditch the carbs, but potatoes are a healthy carbohydrate. Stick to medium or small portions to avoid spiking blood sugar levels.

Sweet potatoes are an even better nutritional bet, containing healthy amounts of vitamin C, B and potassium. The real danger

comes when you smother your spuds with butter, sour cream and/or bacon.

4. Eggs. “There’s been so much unnecessary controversy over eggs,” says Dr. Colello. Eggs are protein-rich and an excellent weight-loss food. You can enjoy up to 12 eggs weekly.

5. Salt. Recent studies have shown that salt is not the heart threat it has been made out to be. But there’s no getting around the fact that Americans consume too much of it, mainly from processed foods.

Unless you have high blood pressure or other sodium-sensitive conditions, moderate levels of salt are fine for most people. Reduce junk food intake and use unrefined sea salt, which contains more healthy minerals than standard table salt.

6. Coconut oil. Saturated fats were thrown under the bus for decades, but coconut oil—which is a saturated fat—is actually good for you, studies show.

“It contains medium chain triglycerides that have been shown to promote weight loss,” Ellen Kamhi, author of “The Natural Medicine Chest” tells *Newsmax Health*. “They accelerate the metabolism while lowering blood levels of cholesterol.”

Kamhi says coconut oil may also improve digestion and protects the circulatory and cardiovascular systems.

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