

Red tomatoes are known for large amounts of the phytonutrient lycopene, a type of carotenoid that gives tomatoes their red color. One small tomato provides:

- 20% of daily vitamin C needs.
- 15% of daily vitamin A needs.

# Farm to Health Series

MAXIMIZE YOUR NUTRIENTS FROM:

## RED TOMATOES



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### HOW THEY IMPROVE HEALTH

- Lycopene acts as an antioxidant in the body and may reduce inflammation.
- High tomato intake is related to reduced risk of prostate cancer and possibly other cancers, as well as heart disease.

### NUTRIENT AND PHYTONUTRIENT CHANGES

- For best flavor and highest lycopene levels in fresh tomatoes, pick when ripe and red. They will continue to ripen at home if stored at room temperature.
- Lightly cooked and canned tomatoes are a good option for optimizing lycopene content. However, there is some loss of vitamins A and C. Vitamin C is better preserved when canned or cooking liquid is consumed.
- Eating tomatoes with a little oil can help your body absorb the lycopene.
- Drying causes significant losses in vitamin C and vitamin A. Choose other preservation methods to maximize nutrient and phytonutrient content.



For more information or how to maximize nutrients in other fruits and vegetables, see <http://localfoods.osu.edu/maximizenutrients>.

# Recipe: Super-Bowl Tomato Soup

(Reprinted with permission from the American Institute for Cancer Research, [www.aicr.org](http://www.aicr.org))

- To maximize the nutritional value, this recipe uses canned tomatoes and tomato juice and includes oil.

## Ingredients:

- 1 Tbsp. extra virgin olive oil
- 1 cup chopped onion
- 1/3 cup chopped scallions, green and white parts
- 1 (28-oz.) can no-salt added whole tomatoes in tomato sauce
- 3 marinated sun-dried tomato halves, rinsed and chopped
- 1 tsp. dried basil
- 1/2 tsp. sugar
- 1 cup low-sodium tomato juice
- Salt and freshly ground pepper
- Garlic croutons, if desired, for garnish

## Directions:

- In small Dutch oven or large, heavy saucepan, heat oil over medium-high heat. Add onions and scallions, and cook until onions are soft, about 5 minutes, stirring occasionally. Add tomatoes one at a time, holding each over the pot and crushing it through your fingers. Add tomato sauce remaining in can. Add sun-dried tomatoes, basil, and sugar. Bring to a boil, reduce heat, cover and simmer soup for 20 minutes.
- Using immersion blender, food processor or regular blender, purée soup until it is pulpy to smooth, as you prefer. Blend in tomato juice. Season soup to taste with salt and pepper. Serve immediately, garnished with croutons, if using. Or cool soup and refrigerate, tightly covered, for up to 3 days.

**Makes 6 servings. Per serving:** 71 calories, 2.5 g fat (< 1g sat fat), 12 g carbohydrates, 2 g protein, 2 g fiber, 64 mg sodium, 440 IU vitamin A (8% DV), 32 mg vitamin C (53% DV), 35 µg vitamin K (44% DV), 488 mg potassium (14% DV)



## OTHER FOOD SOURCES OF KEY NUTRIENTS AND PHYTONUTRIENTS:

Lycopene

Watermelon

Red Grapefruit

Vitamin C

Bell Peppers

Strawberries

Broccoli

