

Lycopene in Tomatoes and Prostate Cancer

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Lycopene, a powerful [antioxidant](#), is found abundant in tomatoes and tomato products. Studies found that lycopene may help reduce some cancer and heart disease. The most compelling evidence so far is the role of lycopene in prostate cancer prevention.

In a study of over 40,000 health professionals, Harvard investigators found that men who ate more than 10 servings tomato-based foods daily (like cooked tomatoes and tomato sauce,) had a 35 percent lower risk of developing prostate cancer than those who ate the least amount of these foods. The benefits of lycopene was more pronounced with advanced stages of prostate cancer.

In another study of prostate cancer, researchers looked at blood levels of lycopene and found that the risk of developing prostate cancer, especially aggressive cancer, decreased with increasing blood lycopene levels. Men taking 50mg of lycopene daily had significantly higher level of lycopene. In this study, researchers found that high level of lycopene in the blood was associated with low PSA (prostate specific antigen) levels. High PSA levels in blood are often a sign of prostate cancer.

Enjoy the benefits of lycopene by eating more tomatoes and processed tomato products. Indeed, research showed that lycopene is better absorbed by the body when tomatoes are processed. It is due to the fact that lycopene is bound to tomato's cell structure; processing releases lycopene from the cell structure.