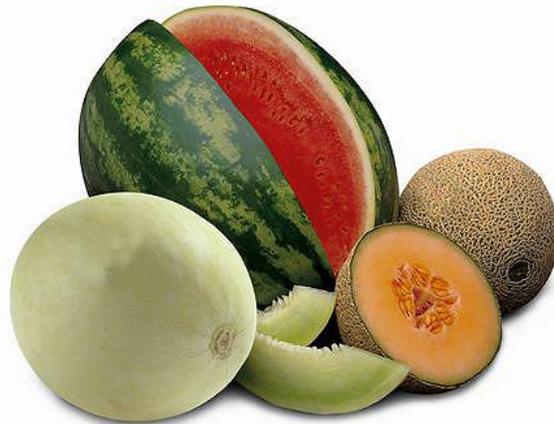


# HEALTH BENEFITS OF SUMMER MELONS



Summer is the season to surround yourself with melons! Most melons reach their nutrient-packed peak of perfection right around this time of year, making their luscious, sweet, and juicy flavor the perfect summer snack! Melons are low in sodium, and very low in saturated fat and cholesterol. They are a good source of dietary fiber, vitamin K, potassium, and copper, and a very good source of vitamin C and vitamin B6.

*Listed below are a few of the most common summer melons, along with nutrition facts for each!*

## **WATERMELON**

Watermelon has recently moved to the front of the line in recent studies on high-lycopene foods. Lycopene is especially important for our cardiovascular and bone health. Lycopene is also helpful in reducing the risk of prostate, breast, and endometrial cancers, as well as lung and colon cancer.

## **CANTALOUPE**

Cantaloupe is an excellent source of Vitamins A, B6 and C, and potassium. It's also a very good source of dietary fiber, folate, niacin, pantothenic acid, and thiamine. These nutrients are beneficial for improving endurance, healthy kidney and spleen function, and for lowering blood pressure.

## **HONEYDEW**

Honeydew melons are full of Vitamin C, potassium, pantothenic acid, as well as Vitamin B6 which help to beat high blood pressure levels, skin conditions and various other difficulties of the circulatory system.

## **PICKING YOUR MELON**

Finding the right melon in general is often a difficult task. Sometimes, slicing open a ripe melon leads to love at first bite while other times it's a total disappointment. Keep in mind that the longer a melon ripens on the vine, the sweeter it will be. Here's a chef's tip for picking out the perfect melon in the produce section or at your farmers' market.

Using your hand, gently tap the side of the melon several times with your ears close by. A high-pitched, dry tone indicates an under-ripe melon. A monotone dead thud indicates an over-ripe melon. A deep-pitched tone indicates a melon that is ripe. Also, smell the stem or other end of the melon for a slightly sweet aroma.