

The Measure of Divine Attention

Wherefore, if God so clothe the grass of the field, which today is, and tomorrow is cast into the oven, shall he not much more clothe you, O ye of little faith?

Matthew 6:30. {UL 201.1}

Christ taught His disciples that the measure of divine attention bestowed on any of God's work is proportionate to the rank which that object occupies in the scale of creation. The little brown sparrow, apparently the most inferior of birds, is watched over by Providence. Not one falls to the ground without the notice of our heavenly Father. The flowers of the field, the grass which clothes the earth with verdure—all share the notice and care of our heavenly Father. {UL 201.2}

"Behold the fowls of the air," Christ said: "for they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feedeth them. Are ye not much better than they? Which of you by taking thought can add one cubit unto his stature? And why take ye thought for raiment? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin: and yet I say unto you, That even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these" (Matthew 6:26-29). If the lilies of the field are objects upon which the great Master Artist has bestowed care, making them so beautiful that they out-rival the glory of Solomon, the greatest king that ever wielded a scepter; if the grass of the field is made into a beautiful carpet for the earth, can we form any idea of the regard which God bestows upon man, who was formed in His image? {UL 201.3}

God has given man intellect in order that he may comprehend greater things than these beautiful objects in nature. He carries the human agent into a higher department of truth, leading the mind higher and still higher, and opening to him the divine mind. And in the book of God's providence, the volume of life, each one is given a page. That page contains every particular of his history. Even the hairs of his head are numbered. God's children are never absent from His mind. {UL 201.4}

And though sin existed for ages, seeking to counteract the merciful tide of love flowing from God to the human race, **yet the love and care that God bestows upon the beings He has created in His own image has not ceased to increase in richness and abundance.** "God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." He crowned His benevolence by the inestimable gift of Jesus. By this sacrifice, a healing flood of life and heavenly grace was poured upon our world. This was God's gift to man—a gift that defies all computation.—Letter 4, July 1, 1896, "To the Men Who Occupy Responsible Positions in the Work." {UL 201.5}

WATCH YE SAINTS

FOUNTIANVIEW

1. Watch, ye saints, with eyelids waking;
Lo! the powers of heav'n are shaking;
Keep your lamps all trimm'd and burning,
Ready for your Lord's returning.

Refrain:

Lo! he comes, lo! Jesus comes;
Lo! he comes, he comes, all glorious!
Jesus comes to reign victorious,
Lo! he, comes, yes, Jesus comes.

2. Lo! the promise of your Saviour,
Pardoned sin and purchased favor,
Blood-wash'd robes and crowns of glory;
Haste to tell redemption's story. [Refrain]

3. Kingdoms at their base are crumbling,
Hark! his chariot wheels are rumbling;
Tell, O tell of grace abounding,
Whilst the seventh trump is sounding. [Refrain]

4. Nations wane, tho' proud and stately;
Christ his kingdom hasteneth greatly;
Earth her latest pangs is summing;
Shout, ye saints, your Lord is coming. [Refrain]

5. Sinners, come, while Christ is pleading;
Now for you he's interceding;
Haste, ere grace and time diminished
Shall proclaim the mystery finished. [Refrain]

15 Incredibly Heart-Healthy Foods

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Heart disease accounts for nearly one-third of all deaths worldwide.

Diet plays a major role in heart health and can impact your risk of heart disease.

In fact, certain foods can influence blood pressure, triglycerides, cholesterol levels and inflammation, all of which are risk factors for heart disease.

1. Leafy Green Vegetables

Leafy green vegetables like spinach, kale and collard greens are well-known for their wealth of vitamins, minerals and antioxidants.

In particular, they're a great source of **vitamin K**, which helps protect your arteries and promote proper blood clotting.

They're also high in dietary nitrates, which have been shown to reduce blood pressure, decrease arterial stiffness and improve the function of cells lining the blood vessels.

Some studies have also found a link between increasing your intake of leafy green vegetables and a lower risk of heart disease.

One analysis of eight studies found that increasing leafy green vegetable intake was associated with up to a **16%** lower incidence of heart disease.

Another study in **29,689 women** showed that a high intake of leafy green vegetables was linked to a significantly lower risk of coronary heart disease.

SUMMARY Leafy green vegetables are high in vitamin K and nitrates, which can help reduce blood pressure and improve arterial function. Studies show that a higher intake of leafy greens is associated with a lower risk of heart disease.

2. Whole Grains

Whole grains include all three nutrient-rich parts of the grain: germ, endosperm and bran.

Common types of whole grains include whole wheat, brown rice, oats, rye, barley, buckwheat and quinoa.

Compared to refined grains, **whole grains** are higher in fiber, which may help reduce “bad” LDL cholesterol and decrease the risk of heart disease.

Multiple studies have found that including more whole grains in your diet can benefit your heart health.

One analysis of **45 studies** concluded that eating three more servings of whole grains daily was associated with a **22%** lower risk of heart disease.

Similarly, another study found that eating at least three servings of whole grains significantly decreased systolic blood pressure by **6 mmHg**, which is enough to reduce the risk of stroke by about **25%**.

When purchasing whole grains, make sure to read the ingredients label carefully. Phrases like “whole grain” or “whole wheat” indicate a whole-grain product, while words like “wheat flour” or “multigrain” may not.

SUMMARY Studies show that eating whole grains is associated with lower cholesterol and systolic blood pressure, as well as a lower risk of heart disease.

3. Berries

Strawberries, blueberries, blackberries and raspberries are jam-packed with important nutrients that play a central role in heart health.

Berries are also rich in antioxidants like anthocyanins, which protect against the oxidative stress and inflammation that contribute to the development of heart disease.

Studies show that eating lots of berries can reduce several risk factors for heart disease.

For example, one study in **27 adults** with metabolic syndrome showed that drinking a beverage made of freeze-dried strawberries for eight weeks decreased “bad” LDL cholesterol by **11%**.

Metabolic syndrome is a cluster of conditions associated with a higher risk of heart disease.

Another study found that eating blueberries daily improved the function of cells that line the blood vessels, which help control blood pressure and blood clotting.

Additionally, an analysis of **22 studies** showed that eating berries was associated with reductions in “bad” LDL cholesterol, systolic blood pressure, body mass index and certain markers of inflammation.

Berries can be a satisfying snack or delicious low-calorie dessert. Try adding a few different types to your diet to take advantage of their unique health benefits.

SUMMARY Berries are rich in antioxidants. Studies show that eating them can reduce multiple risk factors for heart disease.

4. Avocados

Avocados are an excellent source of heart-healthy monounsaturated fats, which have been linked to reduced levels of cholesterol and a lower risk of heart disease.

One study looked at the effects of three cholesterol-lowering diets in **45 overweight** and obese people, with one of the test groups consuming one avocado per day.

The avocado group experienced reductions in “bad” LDL cholesterol, including lower levels of small, dense LDL cholesterol, which are believed to significantly raise the risk of heart disease.

Another study including **17,567 people** showed that those who ate avocados regularly were half as likely to have metabolic syndrome.

Avocados are also rich in potassium, a nutrient that’s essential to heart health. In fact, just one avocado supplies **975 milligrams** of potassium, or about **28%** of the amount that you need in a day.

Getting at least **4.7 grams** of potassium per day can decrease blood pressure by an average of **8.0/4.1** mmHg, which is associated with a **15%** lower risk of stroke.

SUMMARY Avocados are high in monounsaturated fats and potassium. They may help lower your cholesterol, blood pressure and risk of metabolic syndrome.

5. Fatty Fish and Fish Oil

Fatty fish like salmon, mackerel, sardines and tuna are loaded with omega-3 fatty acids, which have been studied extensively for their heart-health benefits.

In one study in **324 people**, eating salmon three times a week for eight weeks significantly decreased diastolic blood pressure.

Another study showed that eating fish over the long term was linked to lower levels of total cholesterol, blood triglycerides, fasting blood sugar and systolic blood pressure.

Additionally, each **3.5-ounce (100-gram)** decrease in weekly fish consumption was associated with a **19%** higher likelihood of having one additional risk factor for heart disease, such as high blood pressure, diabetes or obesity.

If you don't eat much seafood, fish oil is another option for getting your daily dose of omega-3 fatty acids.

Fish oil supplements have been shown to reduce blood triglycerides, improve arterial function and decrease blood pressure.

Other **omega-3 supplements** like krill oil or algal oil are popular alternatives.

SUMMARY Fatty fish and fish oil are both high in **omega-3 fatty acids** and may help reduce heart disease risk factors, including blood pressure, triglycerides and cholesterol.

6. Walnuts

Walnuts are a great source of fiber and micronutrients like magnesium, copper and manganese.

Research shows that incorporating a few servings of walnuts in your diet can help protect against heart disease.

According to one review, eating walnuts can reduce “bad” LDL cholesterol by up to **16%**, lower diastolic blood pressure by **2–3 mm Hg** and decrease oxidative stress and inflammation.

Another study in **365 participants** showed that diets supplemented with walnuts led to greater decreases in LDL and total cholesterol.

Interestingly, some studies have also found that regularly eating nuts such as walnuts is associated with a lower risk of heart disease.

SUMMARY Studies suggest that walnuts can help reduce cholesterol and blood pressure and may be associated with a lower risk of heart disease.

7. Beans

Beans contain resistant starch, which resists digestion and is fermented by the beneficial bacteria in your gut.

According to some animal studies, resistant starch can improve heart health by decreasing blood levels of triglycerides and cholesterol.

Multiple studies have also found that eating beans can reduce certain risk factors for heart disease.

In one study in **16 people**, eating pinto beans reduced levels of blood triglycerides and “bad” LDL cholesterol.

One review of **26 studies** also found that a diet high in **beans and legumes** significantly decreased levels of LDL cholesterol.

What’s more, eating beans has been linked to reduced blood pressure and inflammation, both of which are risk factors for heart disease.

SUMMARY Beans are high in resistant starch and have been shown to reduce levels of cholesterol and triglycerides, lower blood pressure and decrease inflammation.

8. Dark Chocolate

Dark chocolate is rich in antioxidants like flavonoids, which can help boost heart health.

Interestingly, several studies have associated eating chocolate with a lower risk of heart disease.

One large study showed that those who ate chocolate at least five times per week had a **57%** lower risk of coronary heart disease than non-chocolate eaters.

Another study found that eating chocolate at least twice per week was associated with a **32%** lower risk of having calcified plaque in the arteries.

Keep in mind that these studies show an association but don't necessarily account for other factors that may be involved.

Additionally, chocolate can be high in sugar and calories, which can negate many of its health-promoting properties.

Be sure to pick a high-quality dark chocolate with a cocoa content of at least **70%** and moderate your intake to make the most of its heart-healthy benefits.

SUMMARY Dark chocolate is high in antioxidants like flavonoids. It has been associated with a lower risk of developing calcified plaque in the arteries and coronary heart disease.

9. Tomatoes

Tomatoes are loaded with lycopene, a natural plant pigment with powerful antioxidant properties.

Antioxidants help neutralize harmful free radicals, preventing oxidative damage and inflammation, both of which can contribute to heart disease.

Low blood levels of lycopene are linked to an increased risk of heart attack and stroke.

One review of **25 studies** showed that a high intake of foods rich in lycopene was associated with a reduced risk of heart disease and stroke.

Another study in **50 overweight** women found that eating two raw tomatoes four times per week increased levels of “good” HDL cholesterol.

Higher levels of HDL cholesterol can help remove excess cholesterol and plaque from the arteries to keep your heart healthy and protect against heart disease and stroke.

SUMMARY Tomatoes are rich in lycopene and have been associated with a lower risk of heart disease and stroke, as well as an increase in “good” HDL cholesterol.

10. Almonds

Almonds are incredibly nutrient-dense, boasting a long list of vitamins and minerals that are crucial to heart health.

They're also a good source of heart-healthy monounsaturated fats and fiber, two important nutrients that can help protect against heart disease.

Research suggests that eating **almonds** can have a powerful effect on your cholesterol levels, too.

One study in **48 people** with high cholesterol showed that eating **1.5 ounces (43 grams)** of almonds daily for six weeks reduced belly fat and levels of “bad” LDL cholesterol, two risk factors for heart disease.

Another small study had similar findings, reporting that eating almonds for four weeks resulted in significant decreases in both LDL and total cholesterol.

Research also shows that eating almonds is associated with higher levels of HDL cholesterol, which can help reduce plaque buildup and keep your arteries clear.

Remember that while almonds are very high in nutrients, they're also high in calories. Measure your portions and moderate your intake if you are trying to lose weight.

SUMMARY Almonds are high in fiber and monounsaturated fats and have been linked to reductions in cholesterol and belly fat.

11. Seeds

Chia seeds, flaxseeds and hemp seeds are all great sources of heart-healthy nutrients, including fiber and **omega-3 fatty acids**.

Numerous studies have found that adding these types of **seeds** to your diet can improve many heart disease risk factors, including inflammation, blood pressure, cholesterol and triglycerides.

For example, hemp seeds are high in arginine, an amino acid that has been associated with reduced blood levels of certain inflammatory markers.

Furthermore, flaxseed may help keep blood pressure and cholesterol levels under control.

One study in people with high blood pressure showed that eating **30 grams** of flax seeds every day for half a year decreased systolic blood pressure by an average of **10 mmHg** and reduced diastolic blood pressure by **7 mmHg**.

In one study of **17 people**, eating bread made with flaxseed was shown to reduce total cholesterol by **7%** and "bad" LDL cholesterol by **9%**.

Although more research is needed about the effects of chia seeds on heart health in humans, one study in rats found that eating chia seeds lowered blood triglyceride levels and boosted levels of beneficial HDL cholesterol.

SUMMARY Human and animal studies have found that eating seeds may improve several heart disease risk factors, including inflammation, blood pressure, cholesterol and triglycerides.

12. Garlic

For centuries, **garlic** has been used as a natural remedy to treat a variety of ailments.

In recent years, research has confirmed its potent medicinal properties and found that garlic can even help improve heart health.

This is thanks to the presence of a compound called allicin, which is believed to have a multitude of therapeutic effects.

In one study, taking garlic extract in doses of **600–1,500 mg** daily for **24 weeks** was as effective as a common prescription drug at reducing blood pressure.

One review compiled the results of **39 studies** and found that garlic can reduce total cholesterol by an average of **17 mg/dL** and “bad” LDL cholesterol by **9 mg/dL** in those with high cholesterol.

Other studies have found that garlic extract can inhibit platelet buildup, which may reduce the risk of blood clots and stroke.

Be sure to consume garlic raw or crush it and let it sit for a few minutes before cooking. This allows for the formation of allicin, maximizing its potential health benefits.

SUMMARY Garlic and its components have been shown to help reduce blood pressure and cholesterol. They may also help inhibit blood clot formation.

13. Olive Oil

A staple in the Mediterranean diet, the heart-healthy benefits of olive oil are well documented.

Olive oil is packed with antioxidants, which can relieve inflammation and decrease the risk of chronic disease.

It is also rich in monounsaturated fatty acids, and many studies have associated it with improvements in heart health.

In fact, one study in **7,216 adults** at high risk for heart disease showed that those who consumed the most olive oil had a **35%** lower risk of developing heart disease.

Furthermore, a higher intake of olive oil was associated with a **48%** lower risk of dying from heart disease.

Another large study also showed that a higher intake of olive oil was associated with lower systolic and diastolic blood pressure.

Take advantage of the many benefits of olive oil by drizzling it over cooked dishes or adding it to vinaigrettes and sauces.

SUMMARY Olive oil is high in antioxidants and monounsaturated fats. It has been associated with lower blood pressure and heart disease risk.

14. Edamame

Edamame is an immature soybean frequently found in Asian cuisine.

Like other soy products, edamame is rich in soy isoflavones, a type of flavonoid that may help lower cholesterol levels and improve heart health.

One analysis of **11 studies** showed that soy isoflavones reduced total cholesterol by **3.9 mg/dL** and “bad” LDL cholesterol by **5 mg/dL**.

Another analysis showed that **50 grams** of soy protein per day decreased LDL cholesterol by an average of **3%**.

If combined with other changes to diet and lifestyle, even slightly reducing your cholesterol levels can have a big impact on your risk of heart disease.

One study showed that decreasing total cholesterol levels by just **10%** was associated with a **15%** lower risk of dying from coronary heart disease.

In addition to its isoflavone content, edamame is a good source of other heart-healthy nutrients, including dietary fiber and antioxidants.

SUMMARY Edamame contains soy isoflavones, which have been shown to help decrease cholesterol levels. Edamame also contains fiber and antioxidants, which can also benefit heart health.

15. Green Tea

It's also brimming with polyphenols and catechins, which can act as antioxidants to prevent cell damage, reduce inflammation and protect the health of your heart. According to one review of **20 studies**, a higher intake of **green tea** catechins was associated with significantly lower levels of LDL and total cholesterol.

What's more, an analysis including **1,367 people** showed that green tea decreased both systolic and diastolic blood pressure.

Another small study found that taking green tea extract for three months reduced blood pressure, triglycerides, LDL and total cholesterol, compared to a placebo.

Taking a green tea supplement or drinking matcha, a beverage that is similar to green tea but made with the whole tea leaf, may also benefit heart health.

SUMMARY Green tea is high in polyphenols and catechins. It has been associated with lower cholesterol, triglycerides and blood pressure.

CLOSING THOUGHTS

And though sin existed for ages, seeking to counteract the merciful tide of love flowing from God to the human race, yet the love and care that God bestows upon the beings He has created in His own image has not ceased to increase in richness and abundance. "God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." He crowned His benevolence by the inestimable gift of Jesus. By this sacrifice, a healing flood of life and heavenly grace was poured upon our world. This was God's gift to man—a gift that defies all computation.

CLOSING PRAYER

Christ taught His disciples that the measure of divine attention bestowed on any of God's work is proportionate to the rank which that object occupies in the scale of creation. The little brown sparrow, apparently the most inferior of birds, is watched over by Providence. Not one falls to the ground without the notice of our heavenly Father. The flowers of the field, the grass which clothes the earth with verdure—all share the notice and care of our heavenly Father. Thank you, Lord. In Jesus name. Amen.