

SUPERFOODS



The term “superfood” has gained increasing popularity – but what does it really mean? Do superfoods have superpowers?

WHAT IS A SUPERFOOD?

The term “superfood” is generally used to describe a food that supposedly provides certain health benefits due to the food’s high nutrient density. Often, claims are made that superfoods can prevent or cure chronic diseases such as cancer. However, this term is not regulated or evidence-based, and therefore these claims may not be accurate.

FOOD MARKETING

The term “superfoods” is mainly used by food companies as a marketing tool to increase sales and prices. The use of this term has led to a billion-dollar industry. It is not based in academic research, and can be misleading to consumers, implying that certain “superfoods” are superior to other foods not labelled this way. This is not necessarily the case.

NUTRIENT DENSITY

Certain foods are in fact more nutrient dense than others. For example, an apple will provide more essential nutrients to your body than a cookie. However, nearly all foods provide some nutrients, and a variety of nutrients are best gained by eating a diversity of foods rather than focusing on a select few “superfoods”.

THE BOTTOM LINE

While foods marketed as “superfoods” may be nutritious, they are not the only foods that provide our bodies with the nutrients we need. Variety is important in our diet to gain a wide array of essential vitamins and minerals. By following superfood trends and focusing on the foods marketed in this way, you are reducing variety and may be missing out on other, equally nutritious foods! Instead, focus on following Canada’s Food Guide, and eating a assortment of foods from all food groups.