

# Better Health...Best Self

Health, Wellness & Fitness Newsletter

Vernon Park Church of God

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## Nutrition/Health News

### Super Foods 101

#### What are Super Foods you ask?

These are the most nutrient dense plant based foods in existence that are grown in specific regions around the world. These foods provide amazing nourishment, but also have cultural significance in their native countries. Adding Super Foods to your diet, along with high quality vitamins, can potentially increase stamina, energy, mental focus, longevity, repair cell damage, and slow down the aging process. There are many Super Foods that are currently made available in the United States, but our focus will be on the top four: Cacao, Chia Seeds, Goji Berries, and Maca Root Powder. **The raw, organic version of these foods is best to consume.** They can be found at Whole Foods, Mariano's, and health food stores.



**Cacao** is chocolate that is unprocessed and in its purist form.

Cacao originates from Central America and Mexico. It helps the body absorb calcium, fight disease, and stabilize moods. It can be found in its powder form or small chunks called "Cacao nibs". Because this chocolate is unpolluted with sugar, dairy, and stabilizers found in commercial

chocolate, it has a bittersweet taste. Combining Cacao with bananas and/or avocados in a smoothie will produce a delicious creamy chocolate treat!

#### Chia Seeds

are native to Central America.



They contain more Omega-3 fatty acids than salmon, more calcium per fluid ounce than milk, and significant amounts of fiber, iron, calcium, magnesium, potassium, B-vitamins, and antioxidants. The high fiber and nutrient dense attributes of chia seeds helps the body to stabilize blood sugar levels, and eliminate waste regularly. Chia seeds are low in calories, have a bland taste, won't alter the flavor of your food, and are incredibly easy to incorporate into any diet. They can be added to any dish, snack, baked good, smoothie, water, or juice...just sprinkle away!



**Goji Berries** are found in the Himalayan highlands of China

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### Kale & Your Health

**Kale is low in calorie, high in fiber, and has zero fat.** One cup of kale only contains 36 calories, 5 grams of fiber, and 0 grams of fat.

**Kale is a detox food** that contains sulfur, which detoxes the body and keeps your liver healthy.

**Kale has more iron than beef.** Its high iron content aids in cell growth and proper liver function.

**Kale has more calcium than milk** and prevents bone loss, osteoporosis, and maintains healthy metabolism.

**Kale is high in vitamin A, C, and, K.** Vitamin A is great for healthy vision and skin. Vitamin C strengthens the immune system, metabolism, and improves joint flexibility. Vitamin K supports bone health and fights a variety of cancers.

**Kale is full of powerful antioxidants** that also protect against various cancers.

**Kale is great for cardiovascular support** and can lower cholesterol levels.

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## Great Super Food

### SMOOTHIE RECIPES

#### Kale Energy Blast



##### INGREDIENTS:

- 1 handful of Kale
- 1 frozen ripe banana
- 1 cup fresh or frozen blueberries
- 1 cup unsweetened almond milk
- ½ cup orange juice
- ½ cup water
- 1 tbsp Chia seeds
- 1 tbsp Goji berries
- 1-2 tbsp Greek yogurt
- 1-2 tbsp raw honey
- 10 raw unsalted almonds

*\*\*High powered extractor systems such as a NutriBullet work best. Traditional blenders may not yield favorable results.*

#### Healthy Chocolate Shake

##### INGREDIENTS:

- 1-2 frozen ripe bananas
- 2 cups unsweetened almond milk
- 1 tbsp organic almond or peanut butter
- ¼ ripe Avocado
- 1-2 tbsp Greek yogurt
- 1-2 tbsp raw honey
- 1-2 tbsp Cacao powder
- ½-1 tbsp Maca powder



## FIT TIP



Add weight training to your cardio workout a couple times weekly, you'll thank yourself later! Weight training is one of the best ways to build strength, improve muscle definition, control bone loss, and strengthen the metabolism. Weight training also improves motor skills that can reduce injury risk. Enjoy the fruits of increased endurance and overall improved quality of life as you grow stronger!

*"Super Foods 101," continued from page 1 —*

and Tibet and are usually consumed sun-dried. These sweet "red diamonds" as they are called in their homeland, contain 18 different amino acids—including 8 of the 9 essential food based amino acids that our bodies cannot manufacture on their own. Goji berries, the planet's richest source of vitamin C, contain 500 times the amount of vitamin C that oranges do. They also contain 21 trace minerals including zinc, iron, copper, calcium, germanium, selenium, and phosphorus. In addition, they contain vitamins B1, B2, B6, and vitamin E. Goji berries even possess more beta carotene per serving than carrots and are unequivocally one of nature's most nutritionally complete foods.



**Maca Root Powder** is made from the maca plant that thrives in the rocky soil and high altitudes of the Andes Mountains of South America. Maca root contains fiber, vitamins E and C, calcium, potassium, iron, and also possess 8 of the 9 essential amino acids. These amino acids are protein building compounds that the body must obtain from external food sources. Maca, however, is primarily known for its natural energy-boosting, immune-boosting, and libido-enhancing properties. This root powder is the leading food known to increase vitality. Maca is so potent, that it's recommended to introduce it into your diet in small amounts. Its nutty flavor is a great addition to any smoothie.

Source: [www.nutribulletblog.com](http://www.nutribulletblog.com)

*"Kale & Your Health," continued from page 1 — Kale is an anti-inflammatory food and has Omega-3 fatty acids that fight against asthma, arthritis, and autoimmune disorders.*

Source: Lewis, A. (2012, April 2). *mindbodygreen*. Retrieved from Top 10 Health Benefits of Eating Kale: <http://www.mindbodygreen.com/0-4408/Top-10-Health-Benefits-of-Eating-Kale.html>

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**Consult your physician before beginning a new exercise regimen or changing your diet.**

