

What Are Antioxidants?

Antioxidants are molecules that can prevent the damaging effects of excessive amounts of **free radicals** in the body by neutralizing and destroying them.

A **free radical** is an atom with an unpaired electron in the outermost shell caused by a process called oxidation. Our body experiences oxidation every day as we breath, eat, sleep and exercise. Oxidation is the cause of aging and more than 200 degenerative diseases. Antioxidants reduce the number of free radicals in the body!

Antioxidant levels in food can be measured. The USDA uses the ORAC (Oxygen Radical Absorbance Capacity) scale to measure the antioxidant capacities in different foods. The recommended ORAC level is a minimum of 3,000. However, studies have shown that increased intake levels can be very beneficial.