Sexual Healing

Aphrodisiacs in your diet may boost your health—and your libido.

January 1, 2009 By Kat Noel

Candlelight is one good way to set the proper Valentine's Day mood. You can also heat up the romance by dining on aphrodisiacs. Although the libido-lifting power of these foods remains scientifically unproved, they certainly may improve your health. *POZ* suggests a nutrient-rich, four-course meal to rev up your energy and get your heart and blood pumping. And you know what happens when your blood starts pumping...

Hors d'Oeuvres

Aphrodite, the goddess of love, often appears standing in an oyster shell, so start your meal with oysters (also considered aphrodisiacs because they resemble the vagina). Legendary lover Casanova, the story goes, ate 50 raw oysters for breakfast every day. On a level more mundane, these shellfish contain high levels of zinc and some other nutrients. Many people with HIV avoid raw seafood, so cook the oysters first (roast in the oven or cook in the top of a double boiler).

Try oysters served in an oversized martini glass with lemon slices and cocktail sauce.

Appetizer

Aromatic and slightly sweet, fennel contains an estrogen-like substance called estragole that may increase women's sex drive. Moreover, fennel is a versatile vegetable that's high in fiber and may help reduce elevated cholesterol levels. Avocados are rich in vitamin E, an antioxidant that may help reduce free radicals that can cause low fertility by damaging the unsaturated fatty acids of sperm membranes.

Try a salad of lettuce, thinly sliced avocados and fennel with a light olive oil and lemon dressing.

Entrée

The capsaicin in a fiery chili pepper causes our bodies to sweat. It also accelerates heart rates and circulation—a physiological response similar to what we experience during sex. Hot peppers may also help reduce blood cholesterol, clear congestion and boost the body's immunity. Sweet basil leaves hold their own as a rich source of magnesium, which prompts muscles and blood vessels to relax and improves blood circulation.

Try a stir-fry combining sliced boneless chicken strips with sweet basil and chili peppers.

Dessert

The banana’s more than a phallic fruit. It’s a rich source of potassium, a mineral that helps maintain normal blood pressure and heart function. Pineapple, rich in vitamin C, may benefit prostate health and speed recovery from impotence. It’s also a good source of thiamin, a B vitamin essential to energy production. Then there’s the Valentine’s perennial, chocolate. Its “feel-good” chemicals phenylethylamine and serotonin give you that euphoric feeling. Dark chocolate, with a high percentage of cacao, seems to promote heart health—and a healthy heart is the lover’s best friend.

Try dipping chopped bananas and pineapple in a dark chocolate fondue. Oh, and don’t forget to kiss the cook.

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http://beta.docker.poz.com/article/aphrodisiac-diet-hiv-15884-4379