Lycopene has been shown to protect eyes from oxidative stress that causes common eye diseases.

Tomatoes are versatile fruits packed with nutrients and antioxidants. They’re a rich source of vitamins A, E and C, potassium, fibre, choline and folic acid.

Autumn Gazpacho - La fête de la Tomate
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made with red bell peppers and minced jalapeño peppers

**ingredients**

(Serves 2)

Prep/cooking time: 15 minutes

**Ingredients**

- 5 medium-large very ripe red tomatoes (with juice), stems removed and diced very small*
- 1 ½ cups finely diced cucumber, with peel
- ½ cup sweet red bell pepper, sliced small
- ½ cup finely diced celery with leaves
- ¼ cup minced onion
- 1 green jalapeño pepper, seeds removed
- 2 cups 100% pure tomato purée
- ¼ cup lime juice
- 3 tablespoon (tbsp) balsamic vinegar
- 4 tbsp extra-virgin olive oil
- ½ tsp dried thyme or one small sprig
- ½ tsp powdered cumin
- A pinch of ground cayenne (hot stuff!)
- 1-2 whole garlic cloves (punctured with a fork and to infuse only).
- A dash of pink salt & ground pepper
- ½ cup water

**how to make it...**

Wash all vegetables. Prepare your ingredients as above and combine them into a big bowl. Mix and cover. Put this in the refrigerator to marinate for at least 2 hours.

Take out of refrigerator. Remove the garlic bud(s). With a handheld blender, purée lightly so that the mixture is partially smooth and you still see small veggie chunks. If you prefer a smoother Gazpacho, then purée longer.

Adjust pink salt and ground pepper to taste. Serve chilled. You can transfer the soup to a big juice jug and pour directly into small bowls or mugs. Garnish with basil leaves. Store leftovers in a covered container in refrigerator.

* You can keep the peels on the tomatoes because they are rich in lycopene. However, if you don’t like the peels, you can remove them and still benefit from the nutrients. To remove the skins, put the tomatoes in a big pot of boiling water and boil until skins start to crack. This can take a few minutes. Strain and cool them under cold running water. Peel off the skins.

@Julie_Zimmer

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Thanks to Julie Zimmer for this recipe:

www.healthcontinuum.org

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Whether fresh or in a jar, tomatoes have been referred to as “functional food” because they provide more than just basic nutrition.