Nutrition Resource

Plant Sterols and Stanols

What are plant sterols and stanols?

Plant sterols and stanols are the plant equivalent of cholesterol. They are naturally found in a wide range of plant-based foods in very small amounts.

When eaten daily in the right quantity they can help to lower cholesterol and reduce the risk of heart disease and stroke. They work by reducing the amount of cholesterol our bodies can recycle.

Plant sterols are found in plant-based foods like vegetables, fruits, wheat germ, whole grains, beans, sunflower seeds, and many vegetable oils.

How much plant sterol do I need?

Eating at least 2 grams (2,000 mg) of plant sterols each day may lower your LDL-C by 5 to 10%.

To get 2 grams of plant sterols each day, you can eat foods with added plant sterols and plant sterol supplements.

It is better if you eat plant sterols with meals or snacks during the day. This will help the plant sterols lower your cholesterol.

Tips on Choosing Plant Sterol-Containing Foods and Supplements

- Check food labels and ingredient lists to see if the food has added plant sterols.
- You might need to use both foods and supplements to reach 2 grams each day.
- Be sure to count the calories in foods with plant sterols too.
- If using supplements, then read the label and do not exceed 2,000 mg of plant sterols each day.
- Only choose supplements that contain plant sterols. Avoid ones with other dietary supplements.

What else do I need to think about when consuming plant sterols?

- Eating plant sterols may lower the absorption of some vitamins. Be sure to eat at least 5 servings of fruits and vegetables each day, such as spinach, kale, carrots, and sweet potatoes.

- There is no health benefit from eating more than 2000 mg of plant sterols a day.
- You may see the words “plant stanol” or “phytosterol” on the food or supplement label. Both are plant sterols and will help lower your LDL-C.
- Only use these products if you need to lower your cholesterol.
- They are not suitable for children and women who are pregnant or breastfeeding, unless advised by your doctor.

Before you start using plant sterol and stanol enriched foods or drinks see a Registered Dietitian to get a healthy eating plan that is tailored to meet your individual needs.

Where can I get Plant Sterols and Stanols?

Foods with Plant Sterols:

Sesame oil, wheat germ oil, mayonnaise, pistachio nuts, olive oil, sage, oregano, thyme, paprika, cocoa butter oil, almond butter, sesame seeds, macadamia nuts.

Foods with Plant Stanols:

Rice bran, wheat germ, oat bran, bran, whole wheat, brown rice, legumes, dried peas, dried beans, lentils, peanuts, almonds, walnuts, pecans, sunflower, pumpkin, and sesame seeds. Broccoli, cauliflower, Brussels sprouts, dill, apples, avocados, tomato, vegetable oil, blueberries.

You can also choose plant sterol Supplements.

Plant Sterol Fortified Foods

For 1 gram of plant sterols:

- Yogurt Astro® Biobest® Yogurt with plant sterols, 1 container (100 g)
- Yogurt Drinks Astro® Biobest® Probiotic Yogurt Drink with plant sterols, 1 bottle (90ml)
- PC® Blue Menu® Yogurt Drink with Plant Sterols, 1 bottle (93ml)
- Juices Oasis® Health Break CholestPrevent Juice, 1 cup (250ml)

For 0.8grams of plant sterols:

- Margarines Becel pro.activ® Margarine with plant sterols, 2 tsp (10 g) – 0.8grams plant sterol
- PC® Blue Menu® Celeb Margarine with plant sterols, 2 tsp (10 g) – 0.8grams plant sterols

More Foods High in Phytosterols:

- Almonds — 161 mg per 100 g serving
- Walnuts — 143 mg per 100 g serving
- Pistachios — 271 mg per 100 g serving
- Flaxseed – 210 mg per 100 g serving
- Wheat germ – 197 mg per one-half cup
- Corn – 70 mg per 100 g serving
- Broccoli – 49.4 mg per 100 g serving
- Lettuce – 38 mg per 100 g serving
- Corn oil - 120mg per 1 tablespoon

Sources:

https://www.lipid.org/sites/default/files/plant_sterols_in_food_final_0.pdf

https://www.heartandstroke.ca/-/media/pdf-files/canada/lwwhd/living-well-heart-disease-nutrition-vol2-en.ashx

https://lpi.oregonstate.edu/mic/dietary-factors/phytochemicals/phytosterols