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Tomatoes - the elixir of youth: the virtues of lycopene illustrated by the "Red Gold Tomatoes from Europe" project promoted by ANICAV

"Red gold" is an important ally when it comes to health.

NAPLES, Italy, Nov. 14, 2024 /PRNewswire/ -- **Good, red, juicy and versatile.** The prince of mealtimes all over the world: **tomatoes**. They are a staple of the Mediterranean diet, but also a source of nutrients and vitamins, and above all **lycopene**. This hydrocarbon gives tomatoes their red colour, and helps the body defend itself against free radicals, preventing diseases related to cellular aging. This is why **tomatoes are considered an ally for good health and an elixir of youth**. So says the international project **"Red Gold Tomatoes from Europe"**, supported by ANICAV (Italian Association of Canned Vegetables Industries) and co-funded by the European Union, which promotes consumption and supports the export **of Italian organic preserved tomatoes to Sweden**.



Lycopene is known to have important antioxidant, cardioprotective and anticancer properties. Tomato pulp contains 11mg of lycopene per 100g, and there are 54mg per 100g in tomato skin. A high level of lycopene in the blood is associated with a **low incidence of certain cancers**, particularly prostate cancer. Tomatoes are rich in **vitamin C** (fundamental for the immune system); according to the WHO (World Health Organization), we require at least 45mg daily to protect against disease. **100g of ripe tomatoes contains 25mg, while 100g of processed tomatoes contains 43mg.**

Tomatoes can be used in **natural cosmetics** too: apply a mixture of tomato juice, glycerine and salt for soft and smooth hands, or make a **beauty mask with tomato**

extracts for toned skin. And for teenagers, creams prepared with tomatoes **can treat acne**.



Tomatoes are low in calories - **only 18 per 100g**. They provide about 1g of protein per 100g, are full of water and are therefore an effective **diuretic**, if eaten raw and without salt. **Tomatoes have a very special characteristic: cooking improves the bioavailability of lycopene** and enhances their antioxidant effects. Kids can snack on a delicious tuna and tomato sandwich and tomato juice. Remember: tomatoes must be properly red and ripe; otherwise, they do not contain lycopene - that is so beneficial. Try this tasty recipe:

Swedish-style salmon (gravlax), organic datterini cherry tomatoes and basil focaccia

<https://redgoldfromeurope.eu/recipes/swedish-style-salmon-gravlax-organic-datterini-cherry-tomatoes-and-basil-focaccia/>

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