**Do you smoke cigarettes? Best foods to protect your lungs**

**CHOWING down on the right type of food can boost your breathing.**

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**By**[**Sarah Buchanan**](http://www.dailystar.co.uk/journalists/sarah-buchanan)/**Published 28th February 2017**

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PUFF: Your diet can help to combat the harmful effects of smoking

Switching up your diet can help to counteract some of the [damage done by fags](http://www.dailystar.co.uk/diet-fitness/500003/What-happens-to-your-body-after-you-quit-smoking-infographic).

Smokers often suffer from chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) which includes respiratory conditions like bronchitis and emphysema.

Health experts from the World Health Organisation (WHO) predict that COPD will soon be the most common cause of death on the globe.

But research, published in the journal Thorax, suggests that loading up your plate with fruits and vegetables can lower your risk of the [smoking-related disease](http://www.dailystar.co.uk/health/583471/Lung-cancer-symptoms-prevention-what-does-it-feel-like) – as well as slashing your likelihood of [heart disease](http://www.dailystar.co.uk/health/546939/Symptoms-heart-disease-pain-chest-going-bed-early) and [cancer](http://www.dailystar.co.uk/health/544332/Cancer-symptoms-how-to-catch-it-early-cough-blood-in-urine-lumps-irregular-moles).

Researchers tracked nearly 45,000 men aged between 45 and 79 for 13 years to assess the link between fag habits and 96 foods.

**“Even if smokers cannot give up smoking, they should consume as many fruits and vegetables as possible”**

**Joanna Kaluza, study author**

They found that guys who skimped on their fruit and veg – by eating less than two servings a day – were over twice as likely to develop COPD compared to men who gobbled down over five portions per day.

The study also showed that each additional daily serving of fruit or veg slashed their risk by between 4% and 8%.

Lead author Joanna Kaluza, professor at Warsaw University of Life Sciences in Poland, said: "Even if smokers cannot give up smoking, they should consume as many fruits and vegetables as possible and people who quit smoking should also increase their consumption."

However don’t just pile up your plate with any groceries because it matters which foods you choose.

Researchers believe antioxidant-rich nosh like leafy greens, apples, pears and peppers are the most effective for boosting lung health because they may help to reduce the inflammation smoking causes.

But eating a health diet cannot reverse all the [harmful effects of smoking](http://www.dailystar.co.uk/diet-fitness/500003/What-happens-to-your-body-after-you-quit-smoking-infographic), so you should consider [kicking cigarettes for good](http://www.dailystar.co.uk/diet-fitness/525763/Smoking-cigarettes-ingredients-chemicals-smoke).

In fact steering clear of smoking the best way to reduce your risk of COPD.

Meanwhile experts believe that between 30% and 40% of all types of cancer can be prevented with a healthy lifestyle and diet.

We spoke to a top clinical nutritionist from Massachusetts General Hospital about what you should put on your plate to boost your health and slash your cancer risk.

In an exclusive interview with Daily Star Online, Emily Gelsomin said: “We continue to learn that what we eat can have an impact on how susceptible our bodies are to contracting cancer.

“While some foods should be taken in moderation, there are steps you can take to alter your diet to help fight against the disease.”