

# Onions and quercetin

Onions are a versatile vegetable that make it easy to add extra goodness to your meals. They contain a unique combination of plant compounds called flavonoids, which have antioxidant and anti-inflammatory benefits. In particular, onions are one of the richest food sources of flavonoids, specifically quercetin.



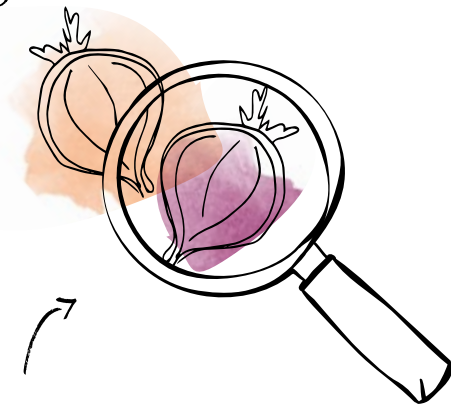
## What is quercetin?

Quercetin is a powerful antioxidant that is found in plant foods, including fruit and vegetables.

It has been shown to help promote a healthy heart and brain as well as reduce the risk of certain lifestyle diseases.

Onions are particularly rich in quercetin - 100g of onion contains 59mg of quercetin (average of onion varieties).<sup>1</sup>

*Did you know?*



The nutrients in an onion are different for each variety\*. **Red onions are higher in quercetin** than white and brown onions. Half a raw, red onion (75g) contains 91 mg of quercetin, that's 121 mg of quercetin per 100g.

## The health benefits of quercetin

### Heart health

There is significant research on heart-healthy quercetin, which has been shown to help reduce blood pressure and improve blood flow by helping heart muscles contract and relax. Quercetin's antioxidant properties also help protect your heart health against free radical damage and inflammation.<sup>2</sup>

### Brain health

Quercetin may help to protect your brain against the impacts of ageing, including slowing cognitive decline and memory loss.<sup>3</sup> Quercetin has also been shown to reduce the risk of neurodegeneration and Alzheimer's disease.<sup>4</sup>

### Weight management

Quercetin helps protect against free radical damage and inflammation, both of which can contribute to excess body weight. Emerging research has found that quercetin reduces the fat around your abdomen, called visceral fat, which can negatively impact your health.<sup>5</sup>

### Type 2 diabetes

Studies have shown that quercetin may help to reduce the risk of developing Type 2 diabetes, as well as managing symptoms and potential complications, such as liver injury.<sup>6</sup>



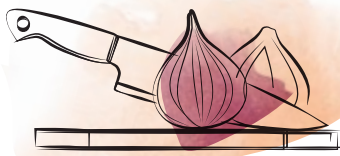
**Daily boost:** Quercetin is metabolised in 24 hours, so it is necessary to consume it daily to maintain the body's antioxidant capacity.<sup>7</sup>

# Preparing onions for maximum antioxidants and vitamins

Half a medium onion (75g) provides a serve of vegetables. To get the most nutrients from your onions, try these tips:

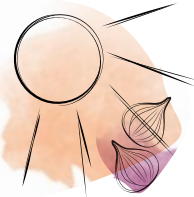
## 1. Chop fresh

Use onions soon after cutting rather than cutting and storing.



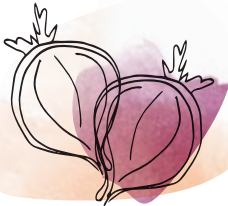
## 2. Limit peeling

Sunlight boosts the levels of quercetin in the outer layers of an onion, so make sure you don't over peel.



## 3. Avoid soaking

Don't soak onions unless the water is included in the meal. Soaking can leach the water-soluble nutrients from an onion.



## 4. Do bake or grill

These cooking options increase the amount of the flavonoids in onions, including quercetin. They also help to make it easier for your body to absorb these antioxidants.



## Selecting and storing tips

- Choose onions that are clean, firm and have shiny tissue-thin skins. The 'neck' should be tight and dry.
- Store onions at room temperature.
- Keep onions in a cool, dark, dry area in a bag or container that enables air circulation.
- Don't store onions with potatoes as they accelerate spoilage.

Find more nutritional information and delicious recipes at:  
[www.australianonions.com.au](http://www.australianonions.com.au)

Red onion, halloumi and zucchini skewers  
click here for the recipe



### References

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\*As part of a healthy varied diet. Nutritional composition varies by onion and cooking method.

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